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[MISFAKEN IDENTITY.]

## ETHEL ARBUTHNOT;

OR,

### WHO'S HER HUSBAND?

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Amy Robart," "The Bondage of Brandon,"

"Breaking the Charm," &c., &c.

#### CHAPTER III.

##### UNEXPECTED NEWS.

Care, the consuming canker of the mind,  
The discord that disorders sweetheart's tune?  
CONSTABLE.

WHEN Ethel reached her home, she rushed through the shop and into the little room where her mother always sat. The door was open so that the old lady might hear the advent of customers and attend to them now that she was deprived of the services of her daughter.

"Oh! mamma, mamma," cried Ethel, throwing herself into her mother's arms and bursting into a flood of hysterical tears, "I have left him."

"Left him, my dear?" repeated Mrs. Arbuthnot, "what for? Left Herbert Layton! Impossible! What is it all about?"

"Do not ask me. It is too dreadful. I cannot tell even you."

"But I have a right to ask."

"No, no."

"I must be told, Ethel, you owe a duty to me, your mother. Confide in me, I am always your friend."

"I have written him a letter, and promised to keep his secret, if he will never come near me again. Oh! mamma, it is too fearful to think of. He did not think I saw him, but he killed his friend, Mr. Palethorpe, this evening, and after robbing him, threw the body into the sea."

Mrs. Arbuthnot became very grave.

"Are you sure of this, my poor child?" she asked.

"I saw it with my own eyes, mamma."

"You have acted rightly," said her mother.

"It's a heavy blow to you and to me. I was hasty in consenting to the marriage. It is my fault; we should have made inquiries. No matter; you are free, he can never claim you."

"We must go away from here, mother," exclaimed Ethel. "I can never face the town people. They will think he has deserted me. They will talk. It is a scandal that I cannot explain. Oh! my heart is breaking, mother dear, for I did love him so, and Heaven help me! I love him now."

She sank down on her knees and her tears fell fast as the summer's rain. Her agony and distress were pitiable to witness.

"My poor stricken dear!" said Mrs. Arbuthnot, stroking her beautiful hair, which had fallen down over her shoulders, "pray for help. There is only one who can comfort you in this great trial."

"I cannot pray, mother, to-night, it is impossible. The words will not come. My lips could not utter them."

"We will go away, darling. If we sell all we

can get some money, and there are other places to live in besides St. Ambrose. Cry, my baby, cry; it will relieve your over-burdened heart."

Ethel sobbed as if her heart would break and her tears relieved her mind. At length Mrs. Arbuthnot got her to bed and sat up by her side watching her as only a mother can watch her child, until sweet sleep visited her eyelids and she sank into a troubled slumber. Poor child! She had been proud of her handsome husband, and her marriage was such a great event in her quiet life. It was a terrible shock to her, and had no other mind been well balanced, her reason must have given way beneath it.

The next morning the postman brought a letter for Mrs. Arbuthnot, bearing the London post-mark. It was from a Mr. Clews, of Bedford Row, that particularly dismal nest of lawyers.

"MADAME," wrote Mr. Clews, "I beg to inform you that Sir Talford Arbuthnot died yesterday. As I am his solicitor, I am fully aware that he has made a will, which leaves all his property to your daughter Ethel, in the event of his brother, Brandon, not surviving him. I have received information to the effect that Brandon Arbuthnot died in India some time ago, therefore I shall call upon Miss Ethel Arbuthnot to prove under the will, and shall have much pleasure in installing her as mistress of Oak Hall. If you will favour me with a visit, we can make arrangements for the funeral, which I presume your daughter and yourself will care to attend. I have the honour to be, madame, your obedient, faithful servant,

"HENRY CLEWS."

Mrs. Arbuthnot was astounded at the receipt

of this communication, and promptly ran upstairs to inform Ethel of the good news. "You are my heiress, my dear!" she exclaimed.

"What do you mean?" asked Ethel. "Your uncle Talford is dead, and everything is yours. A beautiful estate, and at least six thousand pounds a year. Read the lawyer's letter; there can be no mistake about that."

Ethel took and read it with a languid air.

"If Herbert had only waited!" she moaned.

"Forget him, my darling," said Mrs. Arbuthnot. "Never let me hear that wretch's name again. We shall move in a new sphere. I will shut up the shop, and we will go and see Mr. Clews to-day. Is it not glorious news?"

"Glorious!" replied Ethel, abstractedly.

"Fancy you're being an heiress!"

"Fancy!"

"You do not seem pleased. Why any other girl would grow mad with delight."

"It will not narrow the gulf which separates Herbert and I," replied Ethel. "Oh, if he was poor, why did he not trust in me and wait only a little while? I did not want money; it was his love I pined for."

"Tut! tut!" exclaimed Mrs. Arbuthnot; "you will soon get over that. He is not the only good-looking man in the world. Get your things together, my dear; we are off to London this afternoon."

The old lady entirely forgot her daughter's care and trouble in her delight at the good fortune which had befallen them. That afternoon they were on their way to London in order to see Mr. Clews and arrange with him as to the funeral of the late Sir Talford Arbuthnot, preparatory to their taking possession of the estate.

No one at St. Ambrose-on-Sea had seen anything of Mr. Palethorpe's body. It was not even known that he was missing. As Mr. Layton had paid the hotel bill, it was thought that they had gone to town together, and the gossip imagined that Ethel had proceeded to join her husband. So far nothing was known.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### THE HEIRESS AT HOME.

—Lady fair!

Pardon the wildness of my wandering speech;  
The echoes of woe hang on my heart,  
Alas! this is the winter of my love.

OAK HALL, near Forestham, in the county of Shropshire, is one of those fair and grand ancestral domains of which England is so justly proud. No country can boast of such beautiful homes as our own land. The house, which was spacious and substantially built, as if to stand for ever and a day, was erected in the days of the Plantagenets, and re-constructed during the reign of Elizabeth. The park was filled with lordly timber, the oaks being especially fine and large. A carriage drive leading from the lodge-gates to the Hall, a distance of a mile and a-half, was lined with ancient elms, in the top-most branches of which the rooks had for centuries built their nests.

Within sight of the windows of the house was a long, wide lake, full of fish, and studded with little islands, pleasantly covered with verdure and timbered. A boat-house afforded the means of locomotion on the limpid water, and on the largest island was erected a rustic cottage, where the inmates of the Hall could hold picnics in the summer-time. Herds of graceful deer grazed among the ferns or reelined in the leafy dells. The gardens rejoiced in a wealth of lovely flowers and rare shrubs, while the vineyards and pineries afforded luxuries for the table.

Inside the house was splendidly furnished, for the most part in carved oak, black with age, and curiously wrought tapestry adorned the walls, in place of the modern paper. Gold and silver plate was ready for use on the table. Old porcelain and rare bric-a-brac were scattered about in reckless profusion. Pictures by

the old masters, with family portraits, adorned a long gallery, and the echo of the footfall was lost in the soft pile of the rich Turkey carpets.

Such was the magnificent home to which Ethel Arbuthnot had succeeded on the death of Sir Talford, and it was hither that Mr. Clews, the lawyer, conducted her mother and herself the day before the funeral, which was solemnised with all the pomp of woe befitting the decease of a member of so old and proud a family.

Ethel soon fell into her new position, but she was not happy. Her pale and careworn face indicated the nature of the struggle she was going through. Vainly her mother strove to comfort her. She made no complaint; her lips did not murmur at her hard fate, yet she could not help confessing to herself that her heart was dead.

It had been cruelly torn and lacerated on that fearful night, when in the black storm which she had seen the man she loved and had married hurl a fellow creature into eternity with treacherous haste and no word of warning. Dropping her married name of Layton, she was known to all as Miss Arbuthnot, and it being forbidden to her to marry again while Herbert lived, she resolved to turn away from all men, bear her cross in silence, and cultivate an icy coldness of demeanour which was in reality very foreign to her nature.

It was hard to bear. Warm-hearted and affectionate, there was a void in her heart which nothing but a man's love could fill up, for this she longed and pined, but for her such bliss was not to be. Deep down in the recesses of her heart she buried the remembrance of Herbert Layton, though his wickedly handsome face was ever present to her, sleeping and waking, as if it had been effectually and indelibly photographed on the retina of her eye.

She did not love him now. Far different was the feeling she entertained towards this man who had so infamously wrecked her young life, and for whom she had been content to sacrifice all. She had for him a positive feeling of aversion, which if not decided hatred, was nearly akin to it, and so trying to make the best of her lot, she lived her life.

Weeks and months flew by in the calm seclusion of her sylvan paradise, until the period of mourning for her dead uncle had gone by. During this time she entertained no company, not even receiving the visits of the neighbours. She had been seen at church, and it had gone abroad that she was as lovely as she was rich, and many manoeuvring mammas were anxious to introduce their sons, with a view to their making a favourable impression on the heiress. Her long seclusion was commented on, and people thought her very good and pious to grieve all that time for her defunct relative, but they did not know that she was in reality mourning for a dead love, which she had buried before her uncle's corpse, in its heavily-palleted coffin, was lowered into the grave.

At length the time came when she could no longer refuse to see her neighbours, and she awoke from her long lethargy. Taking up the card basket, she examined all the cards which had been left upon her, and prepared to return the friendly visits. There were the names of lords and ladies, of earls and countesses, of gentlemen and their wives, all of as good standing in the county as herself, and these could not be neglected any more without injurious comment. She was in the world and must be of it.

Mrs. Cribb, the housekeeper, an eccentric old personage, who had been born and bred on the estate, and boasted that she knew the pedigree of everyone in Shropshire, was called into the morning-room and questioned as to the standing of those who had called.

If there was anything at all doubtful about anyone, Mrs. Cribb at once supplied the information, and the name was carefully omitted from the visiting list which Ethel was forming, the old housekeeper exercising a sort of censorship, equal to that of the Lord Chamberlain when applications are sent in to him for per-

mission to attend one of the Queen's Drawing-rooms.

It must be recollected that Ethel was an Arbuthnot, and had all the pride of race which characterised the members of that family. She resolved to uphold her position in the county, and that no act of hers should disgrace the old historic name. Sometimes when she thought of her marriage with Herbert Layton, of whom she knew nothing, and of whose family she was in total ignorance, she would catch her breath quickly, as a sharp pain went shooting through his heart.

Who was her husband? Many a time and oft she asked herself that question, so impossible to answer, and bitterly, unceasingly she blamed herself for listening to the honied poison he had so deftly poured into her willing ear, beguiling her maiden's heart and capturing her virgin love.

"Who is this, if you please, Mrs. Cribb?" asked Ethel, holding up a daintily gilt-edged gentleman's card.

"What is the name, miss?" inquired the housekeeper.

"Mr. Henry Carter Gordon."

"Oh, he is considered one of the handsomest young men in the county, miss. Quite rich and of a very good family. Though they do say his brother has turned out a regular scamp, and they have discarded him."

"I suppose we may safely put him down?" said Ethel, entering the name on her list.

"He resides with his mother at the Priory, miss," continued the garrulous housekeeper, "and was a great friend of Mr. Brandon Arbuthnot, him as died in India. It's strange, but I have dreamt of Mr. Brandon three mornings running, and they do say that morning dreams come true."

"What did you dream?" queried Mrs. Arbuthnot, who was a little superstitious and believed somewhat in dreams.

"Maybe you'll laugh at it, but I thought I saw him sitting in the armchair in the library just as he used to do when poor Sir Talford was alive. There he was, as large as life, and just as proud and commanding as ever—all the Arbuthnots are dreadful proud, you know, ma'am, and I fancied you had all gone away. There was no one else in the house, and he rang the bell for me. When I came up he said, 'Mrs. Cribb, the report of my death was false, and I have come to claim my own.'"

Mrs. Arbuthnot looked uneasily at Ethel, for this was a contingency which had not occurred to her; but a moment's reflection showed her that the proofs of Mr. Brandon Arbuthnot's death were such as to be perfectly satisfactory to Mr. Clews, who was a hard-headed, clever lawyer, not at all likely to be deceived in any way, and that the old woman's dream only deserved to be laughed at.

"I am afraid, Mrs. Cribb," she replied, with a smile, "that you must have eaten something for supper which disagreed with you."

"Perhaps I did, ma'am. There is no accounting for dreams." The funniest things come into your head sometimes when you are asleep.

Ethel went on completing her list, and when it was finished, she ordered her carriage, and she and her mother started to go through that unpleasant duty which Society entails on its votaries, and is termed, "making calls." She created quite a favourable impression wherever she went, and everyone declared that she was a very pretty and interesting young lady, whose manner was finished and accomplished as if she had been born in the position she was now called upon to fill. In fact, she was considered an acquisition to the county.

Her last visit was made to a Lady Woodruffe, who was a cousin to the late baronet, and as a relation to the family, took a decided interest in Ethel, whom she was ready to patronise to the full extent of her ability. She received her very kindly, and overwhelmed both her mother and herself with protestations of friendship.

"My dear child," she exclaimed, "you do not know how I have been looking forward to this visit. Of course I commended you, oh! so



much, for your long seclusion. It is so sad to lose a near and dear relation, but I was fearful you were over-doing it, because, you know, everyone was aware that Sir Talford did not treat you too well while he was alive, and it must have been so dreadful to keep a Berlin wool shop. Berlin wool, was it not?"

"Tobacco and cigars, Lady Woodruffe. I am not ashamed of it," replied Ethel.

"Oh, no, of course not; but of course it is quite too awfully dreadful to talk about. We must never talk about it, and I do not think it is generally known. If I am appealed to on the subject I shall always insist that it was Berlin wool, because that is more genteel."

"I am sure you need not do violence to your feelings, and trifle with the truth on my account," answered Ethel.

"Oh, my dear, that is nothing," said Lady Woodruffe, with a sigh. "In society we must sacrifice ourselves for our friends."

"How very hollow society must be, I am almost sorry I emerged from my hermit-like state."

"Yes, there is very little sincerity about people. But hark! There's a horse's hoof. It is my son Tom. He is so anxious to see you. I hear him continually asking questions about his dear cousin."

Ethel rose and took up her parasol and card case.

"So sorry," she exclaimed, "but we must go. You have no idea how the time runs on when one is calling."

"Indeed I have. Do stay one moment. Just one little moment. Tom will be inconsolable if he does not see you. He got a photograph of you at Forestham somehow, and I believe the silly boy has kept it on his mantelpiece ever since. I laugh at him, and tell him that I think he has fully made up his mind to make a match with a girl he has never seen."

"That is very romantic," said Mrs. Arbuthnot.

"Is it not? But Tom is just like that. He takes after his father, who, when I was at home with my father, Lord Penvensey, saw me in the hunting-field. 'I'll marry that girl, Sarah,' and he did. It is all fate."

Ethel cast down her eyes in some confusion. She fancied that her ladyship was beginning early, and trying to take her by storm.

"You can tell all your friends, Lady Woodruffe," she remarked, "that I shall never marry."

"What?" cried her ladyship, in great surprise, not unmingled with dismay, "not marry?"

"Such is my determination."

"But, my dear, you must be joking. For a young, rich and pretty girl not to marry is an absurdity which cannot be tolerated."

"I presume I am the best judge of my own actions."

"Oh, certainly, but I cannot believe it. Your dear mother and I must talk over this. Ah! here comes Tom."

The new-comer who entered the room at this minute was tall, thin, and ungainly. He was very awkward and bashful in his manner, and showed, from his conversation, that he was much more at home in the kennel and the stable than in the drawing-room. Ethel thought that if she was perfectly free to marry, and wished to do so, and there was not another man in the world besides Mr. Thomas Woodruffe, that she would not have him. The interview did not last long, and after receiving advice from Lady Woodruffe to give a large ball to consolidate her acquaintance with the county families, the Arbuthnots took their leave.

"What a curious girl," said her ladyship, when they were gone. "I can't quite make her out. I'm sure she's awfully shy. What do you think of her, Tom?"

"She isn't half bad," replied Tom. "But I've seen handsomer fillies than she. I wonder if she can sit a horse, and go across country?"

"That's all you think of," remarked his mother, pettishly. "I do believe you will turn into a dog or a horse some day. I want you to

make up to the girl, for it is quite time you were settled, and she is quite rich."

"I've got as much as I want, and don't care about being bought," grumbled Tom. "Besides, I could see by the way she looked at me that I should have no chance in that quarter."

The occupants of the carriage had little idea of the way in which they were being talked about.

"Mamma," said Ethel, "that's a good idea of Lady Woodruffe's; we will give a ball. It will afford us a little excitement."

"So it will, my dear," replied Mrs. Arbuthnot. "And you require something to lift you out of that gloomy sadness into which you have fallen of late."

"Ah!" answered Ethel, with a sigh, deep drawn from the heart; "nothing in the world will ever do that."

Poor child! her mind was shrouded in the memory of the past.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE BALL.

The melancholy days are come. The saddest of the year

Of wailing winds and naked woods and meadows brown and bare;

Heaped in the hollows of the grove the withered leaves lie dead;

They rustle to the eddying gust and to the rabbits' tread.

THE death of Sir Talford Arbuthnot had taken place in the autumn, and a whole year had passed since then. Spring had come and gone. Summer had departed, and the cheerless autumn was heralding the approach of Christmas.

This was just the time to give a ball, as everyone had returned from continental trips, and shooting and fox-hunting were occupying the attention of the gentry. Every preparation was made to render the Arbuthnots ball a grand success, and there was quite a struggle to secure invitations, which, though not sparingly, were carefully given under the advice of no less a person than Lady Woodruffe herself. If she did not happen to like anyone selected by Ethel she would say:

"Oh, no, dear, not those horrid people. They were in trade somewhere, and I know the Lord Lieutenant and the Cholmondeley Pennells and the Leveson Gowers, and all those who move in that set, would object most strongly."

So the "horrid people" were struck out, and the goats duly separated from the sheep, so that the invited guests might be select, in deference to the class prejudices of aristocratic English society. Ethel was very becomingly dressed in white and blue; she wore pearls, while her mother, who could not resist the temptation of display, was attired in a heavy black silk, trimmed with gold, and she was loaded with diamonds.

The guests arrived about nine, and dancing was commenced at ten, in the ball-room, which had not been used for years, the late baronet living a retired life. It was about eleven o'clock, and Ethel had danced four times. She was already engaged to the full extent of the programme, and had smilingly to refuse many gentlemen.

Her last partner had taken her for a promenade twice round the room, and at last left her with a polite bow near the conservatory at the upper end of the room, where her mother was engaged in conversation with several ladies. The throng assembled was the most fashionable the county could produce, and elegant toilettes vied with handsome faces.

"Do you not find it quite warm dancing, my dear?" asked Mrs. Arbuthnot.

"Oh, no, I am so fond of waltzing, mamma," replied Ethel. "I think it is charming."

Suddenly, Mr. Thomas Woodruffe presented himself before her, accompanied by another gentleman.

"Good evening, Miss Arbuthnot," he exclaimed.

"I know what you want," she replied. "You

wish to ask for a dance, but there is no chance for you. I am really pained to say that you are too late."

"It's not that," he rejoined. "I am anxious to introduce a friend of mine to you. I believe when you called at his house you saw Mrs. Gordon, but Mr. Gordon tells me that he has not the honour of your acquaintance."

"Indeed! I am sure I shall be only too pleased to know any friend of yours, Mr. Woodruffe."

Ethel turned round expectantly, for she recollected what Mrs. Cribb had said about Mr. Henry Carter Gordon being the handsomest man in the county, and she was woman enough to like to see good-looking men. He was standing still, silent and motionless, like a statue in evening dress, a handsome camelia in his button-hole, his carefully-gloved hands by his sides, looking intently at her.

No sooner did her eyes meet his than she turned deadly pale, and her limbs trembled violently. For a moment she felt as if she was going to faint, a film came before her sight, and the corners of her mouth quivered. But she could not faint before all those people, who were strangers to her, and recovering herself by a violent effort, she listened while Mr. Woodruffe introduced Mr. Gordon.

"After what you have said to my friend," he exclaimed, "it is useless for me, Miss Arbuthnot, to beg the favour of a dance?"

"No," she replied, in tremulous tones; "but I will ask you to take me for a stroll in the conservatory."

He offered her his arm, and they soon disappeared amid the orange trees and the azaleas. The mossy nooks and the beds of ferns, which had been artistically arranged in the form of walks, winding and tortuous, here and there, disclosing alcoves and cunningly-arranged retreats with seats in them. Leading him into one of these, she looked at him angrily.

"How dare you come here?" she exclaimed.

He regarded her with astonishment.

"You invited me," he replied. "I—I really scarcely understand you."

"Do you remember what I said to you in my farewell letter, when we parted?" Ethel continued, scarcely able to control her emotion.

"My dear young lady," said Mr. Gordon, "is this a sudden fit of insanity or a joke on your part? for I give you my word, I have never seen you before."

"Dissembler, as well as villain!" cried Ethel.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"You come here under a false name, purposely to insult me," Ethel continued. "But as heaven hears me, if you do not instantly depart, I will carry out my threat, no matter what the exposure may cost me."

"What is your threat?"

"I will deliver you to the hangman."

"One moment," said he; "of course I will leave your house since you order me to do so. Yet I think I have a right to ask you for whom you have mistaken me?"

Ethel regarded him scornfully.

"Oh, you are a good actor," she answered; "but that will not avail you. I hate you now as much as I thought I once loved you. Since you have heard I am an heiress you wish to make me friendly. It will not succeed, sir."

"You have not answered my question. Who do you take me for, Miss Arbuthnot?"

"The man I was foolish enough to marry—for my husband! Go, Herbert, and never venture into my presence again."

Mr. Gordon stroked his moustache impatiently.

"This is very deplorable," he exclaimed.

"Who's your husband?"

"You are—Herbert Layton!" Ethel answered.

"I regret that this mistake should have arisen, because it has placed me in possession of your secret, and given me a suspicion of something dreadful beyond that; but I assure you, on my honour, and everyone in the room will bear me out in my statement, that I am not Herbert Layton."

It was now Ethel's turn to be amazed. The colour, which had momentarily flushed her cheeks, died away, and she became ashy pale again.

"What have I done?" she cried, clasping her hands.

"You have simply been misled by an extraordinary resemblance, as many others before you have been. I—"

She interrupted him hastily.

"Who are you? What are you, if you are not Herbert Layton?" she asked.

"A gentleman of some property in the county; by name, Henry Carter Gordon. If you doubt me, ask any of your friends. I have lived in the county all my life, and dozens of people in the ball-room have known me from a little child."

"Oh, heaven! I have ruined myself."

"Not so. I am a man of honour, and your secret is safe with me."

The tears flooded her eyes, and she seized his hand eagerly.

"Oh, sir, can I trust you?" she exclaimed.

"Indeed you can."

"I am the most unfortunate of women. It is not well that I should tell you all, but—" "Believe me," he interrupted, "I do not seek your confidence, nor wish to pry into your private affairs. It is enough for me, that you have made a lamentable error. Not a word shall pass my lips."

"How can I thank you?"

"By trying to regain your composure," replied Mr. Gordon. "Be calm, be brave."

"I will endeavour to do so. One question more. You say that you have been taken before for someone else. Who is this person?"

Mr. Gordon shook his head sadly.

"That I may not say. My lips are sealed on that subject. Pray do not press me!"

"Then you, too, have a secret?"

"Perhaps! It is said that there is a skeleton in every house. You are better now. Let us return to the ball-room. We shall be missed, and our absence commented upon. Have no fear, I shall be discreet!"

Overwhelmed with confusion, and blaming herself for her hastiness, Ethel took his arm and suffered herself to be conducted back to the scene of festivity she had quitted under such peculiar circumstances a short time before. Never had she seen such a likeness as there existed between Herbert Layton and Henry Carter Gordon.

The two Dromios of Ephesus and Syracuse could not have been more misleading. Yet there was no reason to doubt his word, and she felt that she had been mistaken in supposing him to be her husband. Many a quickly beating, broken heart is hidden under a calm exterior, and no one knew what Ethel suffered as she re-entered the ball-room, pale, statuesque, but smiling, as she talked conventionally to the gentleman on whose arm she hung.

The meeting with him had re-opened the catafalque of the past, and revealed the grinning skeleton within. The wound which she had thought healed, was, after all, only cicatrized, and burst out bleeding afresh directly the bandage was so rudely torn from it. Still she had duties to perform, and she went through them mechanically, as an automaton performs its moves at a game of chess in obedience to the hidden springs within.

It was a relief to her when the ball was over, and the guests had departed. Mr. Gordon had with good taste, dictated by an innate, gentlemanly feeling, quitted the festive scene early, fearing lest his presence might embarrass and pain his fair hostess, and by three o'clock the ball-room was empty, and the last carriage had rolled away from the gates of the Hall.

Ethel was alone with her mother, and then the re-action came. Bursting into tears, she threw herself into Mrs. Arbuthnot's arms, and sobbed like a child. When she had sufficiently recovered her composure, she narrated all that had happened, and her mother endeavoured to comfort her to the best of her ability, but with poor success.

"I cannot forget him, mamma," sobbed Ethel. "I have schooled myself to hate him, and when I thought I was indignantly driving him from my sight, I longed to clasp him in my arms."

Mrs. Arbuthnot confessed to herself that she could not minister to a mind diseased, and she could only direct her unfortunate daughter to seek consolation from that Power which alone was able to console her in her distress. The following day Ethel took a long and solitary walk through some meadows and along the skirts of a wood.

All the leaves had fallen from the trees, and the wintry wind sighed and sighed in melancholy cadence through the naked branches. Occasionally a pheasant whirled over her head, a startled hare moved in its form, or a rabbit cropping the withered grass, crossed her path. All at once she was conscious of being in the presence of a man. Looking up, and rousing from the deep reverie into which she had fallen, she beheld Mr. Gordon, and held out her hand to him; while a slight flush stole over her face.

(To be Continued.)

### A LOVE LETTER.

I soon shall be back again, sweetheart,  
Already we're trimming each sail,  
And we start in a few days at latest  
If only this fair wind prevail;  
How I long for the pleasant home greeting,  
To gaze in your bright eyes anew,  
As I think of the day when we parted  
And your promise to ever be true.

And bravely that promise when spoken.  
In my absence has ever been kept;  
In fancy I see you when parting,  
Note the sorrowing tears that you wept.  
But a smile has now chased away sorrow,  
And the letter lies snug in your breast  
That tells you the one that is coming  
Will love you the truest and best.

I am coming home once again, sweetheart,  
The old ship speeds swift on its way;  
May the fair wind that wafts me home to you  
Kiss your cheek as it kissed mine to-day,  
And whisper a true heart is speeding  
O'er the waves, golden fringed by the sun,  
And the day is not very far distant  
When, sweetheart, we two shall be one.

O. P.

### SCIENCE.

#### A HUMMING BIRD'S NEST.

RECENTLY a humming bird's nest was found by some persons who had sufficient natural curiosity to overcome their compassion, and who captured the nest, two young hummers and the old one, took them home and had them stuffed. They are to be sent to a museum of natural curiosities. The nest is built on a little twig, and scarcely the size of half a walnut. Both nest and twig are covered with little patches of lichen until it is almost impossible to tell one from the other, and the nest looks like a kind of natural excrescence of the twig. The nest is pliable, like a tiny cup of velvet, and the inside is lined with a white substance, as rich and soft as white silk. The little birds are about the size of bumble bees, very pretty, and they sit on a little perch just outside the nest, with open bills while the old bird hovers over them to feed them.

#### FUNGI IN MAN.

THE human ear is sometimes attacked by a disease which shows itself in the form of a run-

ning sore; in many cases the tympanum is destroyed and hearing lost before the nature of the malady is discovered. The disease is due to the growth of a microscopic plant or fungus of the *Aspergillus* family. It especially thrives when, from any cause, the secretion of wax in the ear is stopped or hindered. The microscope is a valuable assistant in the discovery of this fungus.

Consumption, the most disastrous malady that afflicts humanity, is now said to be caused by a yeast plant that flourishes in the blood. The presence of this fungus in the blood is readily shown by the microscope, and now forms the subject of careful study among physicians. Dr. Ephraim Cutter, M.D., of Boston, Mass., has devoted much labour to this subject, and, we understand, has recently produced microphotographs of the fungus.

#### THE NEW EDDYSTONE LIGHTHOUSE.

THE Eddystone rocks are situated in the English Channel, fourteen miles south-west of the port of Plymouth and twelve and-a-half from Rame Head. They are almost in the line which joins the Start and Lizard points, and in the fair way of all vessels coasting the southern shore of England. So exposed are they to the ocean swell from the south and west that even in comparatively calm weather the waves go raging and thundering over their ledges, and their name indicates the incessant swirl of the deep about them. The new lighthouse will stand 127 feet from the present tower on the South Reef, a rock which the House Rock protects from the south-west, but which has the disadvantage of being much lower, its highest part being never uncovered before half tide, while the lowest parts, on which most of the foundation rests, are four feet beneath the low water level of an ordinary spring tide.

Most of the work done thus far has had to be done under water, and owing to the force of the waves the work could be carried on only at brief and specially favourable intervals. It is expected that the high water level will be reached early next year, when the work will proceed more rapidly, as the courses of stone are all accurately fitted together on shore. It is thought that it will take five years to complete the light-house, which is to follow generally the lines of the present one, though it will differ from it slightly in form and considerably in size. To a height of twenty-five and a half feet above high water mark the tower will be solid, with the exception of a space for a water tank. The side walls beginning at this level will be eight and a half feet thick, diminishing to two and a quarter feet at the top. Nothing but granite will be used, and the blocks will be large enough to form the entire thickness of the hollow portion of the tower.

Under the cornice, to the top of which it is 138 feet from the rock, the diameter of the tower will be eighteen and a half feet; it will contain nine rooms, besides the lantern, each being ten feet high and the seven uppermost ones fourteen feet in diameter. The focal plane of the new lighthouse will be 130 feet above high water, as compared with seventy-two feet in the present building, and the actual useful range of the light will thus be extended from fourteen to seventeen and a half nautical miles. About 5,100 tons of granite will be employed in the construction, and fifty tons of iron for door casings and the like. The fogbells, erected in 1873, will be replaced by a powerful siren and the electric light probably be used.

THE new regulation that Volunteers must retire from the ranks on attaining the age of fifty years will result, it is believed, in a large reduction of the force. Judging by its probable effect upon some well-known regiments, it is calculated that it will turn out 10 per cent. of the whole number, or a total of more than 20,000 men.





[A BOLD CLAIM.]

## THE COST OF CORA'S LOVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"*Clytie Crandbourne*," "*The Golden Bowl*,"

"*Poor Loo*," "*Bound to the Wheel*,"

"*Fringed with Fire*," &c., &c.

### CHAPTER XXIX.

#### THE PLOT THICKENS.

"'Tis virtue that they want, and wanting it,  
Honour no garment to their backs can fit."

MR. LATIMER'S servant has arrived at Lamorna Castle with some of his master's luggage, and Lady Bellinda has been duly informed by the house steward of the fact. The proud, bitter old woman is rendered just a trifle more acrid than usual in consequence.

It does not suit her to utter any comment, or give any order with regard to the new-comer, since she has resolved that until her brother recovers or dies she will keep everything as much as possible in the same condition as it had been before the outrage that had rendered him helpless was committed. For this reason she would not order Latimer to leave the castle, though she would have been very glad if he would have gone away voluntarily, and she remained silent about the new servant because she wished to avoid any communication whatever with his master.

It was an impertinence on Latimer's part, this bringing of a strange man into the house, after what had occurred; it would have been altogether different if he had ever had a servant of his own there before. Now, however, she could only regard it as an act of defiance; but,

while she mentally resented the intrusion, she seemed resolutely to ignore it. "The day of reckoning would come," she told herself, "and then this insolent fellow should feel the weight of her displeasure."

Meanwhile, Mr. Sponsons, Latimer's valet, appeared to be a very inoffensive man. Pale, thin, and eminently respectable in appearance, deferential in manner and intelligent in conversation, he seemed to have been born to a better station in life than that of a gentleman's servant. So the female portion of the servants at the castle decided before he had been there a week, and of course the natural consequence of his becoming a favourite with the fair sex was that all the men in the household hated and at the same time were jealous of him.

With questionable taste, however, Mr. Sponsons neglected the young maids and devoted himself to Mrs. Ransome the housekeeper, and to Mrs. Barlow, who had nursed Miss Cora when she was first brought to the castle, and who had been retained in the household ever since, the young lady still being her particular care, though a young, bright-eyed French girl performed the duties of lady's-maid.

Nurse Barlow took rank immediately after the housekeeper, and she was at this time particularly indignant at the enormity of two lady nurses having been brought from London to attend the marquis and at her own consequent banishment from the sick room.

"As though I didn't know what's best to be done, better than any of 'em," she would observe, with an indignant toss of the ribbons of her cap; "me, who's brought up Miss Cora to be the lovely girl she is—me, who's nursed her through whooping cough and measles and croup—me, as took her the very day as his lordship picked her from under the cart wheels, as you may say—me, as have never been away from her a single day from that hour to this, and to think that after these years of faithful service two strange nurses should be brought into the house, and me not even allowed to go to the bedside of his lordship, nor to do nothing for him! Ah

well! if he'd got his senses, poor dear gentleman, he wouldn't allow it; he'd have said, 'Send Nurse Barlow to me; she'll know how to take care of me,' that's what he'd have said, and so I told my lady."

"I suppose the doctors ordered in these nurses," mildly suggested Sponsons when he first heard this often repeated complaint.

"The doctors! Nothing of the kind, 'twas Lady Bellinda; she always goes in for new-fangled notions, and when I told her nobody could nurse his lordship better than me, what do you think she said?"

"I couldn't imagine," returned the valet, gravely.

"'Fiddlesticks' she says, 'your conceit runs away with you, Nurse Barlow,' that's what she says to me. After seventeen years' service in the family, that's what she says." And Mrs. Barlow's clothing gave unmistakable signs in the form of little cracks and explosions that the stitches were not strong enough to bear the strain of her swelling indignation.

Sponsons repressed an inclination to smile as he remarked:

"Her ladyship has never favoured me with a word or a look; but she seems rather sharp and emphatic; a kind of she dragon in fact."

"Hush! that's the name she goes by in more houses than one; but her bark is worse than her bite, any day; she's good-hearted under all her sharpness, and she's been more than a mother to Miss Cora."

Nurse Barlow did not allow anybody but herself to find fault with a Lyster.

"Miss Cora is not really her niece, I hear?"

"Oh, no," and then the oft repeated story was gone over again, and Nurse Barlow, now on her favourite hobby, described how the child was handed to her in the very clothes it had worn when the marquis picked it up in the street.

"I was nurse at Lady St.ck-ole's, where he was going to when the accident happened," she went on; "they was far away cousins of the Lysters, and I was called into the drawing-room to take the child and feed it and comfort it, and

I've been with Miss Cora ever since, bless her heart, and I'll be with her till I die, for she's promised me that if ever she marries and goes away from the castle I shall go too. She's better than a child of my own to me, the pretty dear."

Once launched on this subject Nurse Barlow could talk away for hours, and thus it happened that Sponsons managed to learn without exciting suspicion by his inquiries, what clothing the child had on when Lord Lamorna picked her up as she fell from the hands of her dead nurse.

Utterly unsuspecting of any evil intentions, and delighted to find so good a listener, Nurse Barlow described the dress of the infant, and, as well as she could remember, the necklace of coral which was the actual cause of their having given her the curiously fanciful name she bore.

"I suppose you can't show the necklace and things to me Mrs. Barlow," observed Sponsons, carelessly, one evening when the old woman was talking to him.

"I'll not" in surprise. "His lordship, I've no doubt, looked them up safely—leastways I've never seen them since that first day; for we put the dear child in fresh clothes, and you may be sure I hadn't the care of the old ones."

"And your memory can't be relied upon as to what they were like," was the man's mental comment. Aloud, however, he asked:

"And how old did you take the baby to be when you first saw her?"

"Can't say, she might have been five or she might have been seven months old; she was a fine child for her age if she wasn't more than six. I've often thought of the poor mother and pitied her if she was alive when the child was lost; 'twould have sent me right mad, to have lost my pretty one, that it would."

"How do you know that the woman who was carrying her, and was killed, was not the child's mother?"

"Know!" with an expression of contempt; "a French nurse with a cap on her head, instead of a bonnet like a decent Englishwoman, don't carry children about dressed in a silk velvet pelisse and cambric underclothing, if they don't belong to their betters. No, Miss Corn belongs to gentlefolks, whoever they may be, that's certain as the daylight."

Sponsons made no comment upon this. Many things at Lamorna Castle puzzled the man, not the least surprising circumstance to him being his own and his master's presence there.

I need scarcely observe that Latimer had not confided in this man more than was absolutely necessary for the successful carrying out of his own schemes, and therefore Sponsons had not the remotest suspicion that his master had been in any way concerned in the attack upon the marquis. Why Latimer should have set his heart upon having Cora claimed by common-law class people he could not imagine, and he saw great difficulty if not danger in attempting to set up such a claim; still he was not in a position to refuse any kind of work, however risky it might be, for starvation and a probable prison stared him in the face if he refused.

His acquaintance with Latimer had been a curious one. They had been at the same school together in childhood, then had lost sight of each other for years, and when they met again Sponsons was a ruined, friendless outcast, picking up a scanty living as a billiard marker in one of the disreputable dens near the Strand. It was there that the old schoolfellows met.

Various transactions of a more than shady character had taken place between them, and at the present time Sponsons had found it convenient to shun his old haunts in London, and betake himself to the country, there being a matter which, to use his own words, "it would, take twenty pounds to square," and if the money were not forthcoming, the police might interfere.

Latimer had promised to provide this sum and to supplement it with more if Sponsons served him faithfully and well, and the man was willing and eager to make the most of his chances.

First of all, with as little loss of time as

possible, Latimer had forged the name of the marquis to the three cheques he had abstracted from the cheque book.

It was rather awkward having to use all three together, still there was no help for it. He made them payable to himself and dated the last the day of Lord Lamorna's "accident." Then having crossed and endorsed them he sent them up to his own bankers in town.

"If any questions are asked I shall say that my cousin gave me the money, but offer to forego it sooner than have any dispute about it," was his comment as he posted the letter. No questions were asked, however, the money was duly placed to his account. Lady Bellinda was not even conscious of the sum being paid, and the sinews of war being thus obtained, Lance Latimer determined to wring the old woman's heart and humble the pride of the girl who had disdained and refused him.

Sponsons made several visits to London about this time, partly on his master's account and partly on his own.

The twenty pounds had been paid—the matter he dreaded had been hushed up, and he could walk about the city with a sense of freedom and independence which he had not enjoyed for some time. He was well-dressed, had money in his pocket, and had no immediate fear of duns or detectives. But he was not idle. Something like gratitude stirred his heart towards the man who had befriended him.

He did not know the whole circumstances of the case, indeed so far was he from having an insight into the dark plot that Latimer was weaving, that he really believed his benefactor to be a much injured man, defrauded of the immense wealth that ought to be his by right of inheritance and birth; and that too by an interloper, picked up in the streets—a wail of whose origin nobody knew anything and who refused even to atone for the wrong she had done, by marrying the rightful heir and sharing with him the wealth that should have been entirely his.

"We can't keep her from being the heiress of the old man if he dies now; or of the old woman if she is perverse enough to cling to her," Latimer had remarked to his confederate; "but we shall pull down her pride and she may be glad to turn to me for sympathy and social status. You quite understand; it will not do for me to pretend to believe the story. And besides—remember, if you fail I shall absolutely and utterly disown all previous knowledge of the plot and all complicity in the matter."

"Agree; but if we succeed?"

"You and your accomplices shall have two hundred pounds between you."

"And you pay down before we start five tenners for the risk?"

"Yes."

So the matter was settled. The fifty pounds was paid, and Sponsons made his last visit to London, at least for a time.

A whole month had passed since that February afternoon when the Marquis of Lamorna had been so brutally attacked and nearly murdered. Doctors had come to and fro. Nurses had been with the noble sufferer night and day, and those who first came had been relieved by others from the training home.

As far as bodily health went the patient seemed to recover rapidly, and after the first fortnight he was sufficiently strong to be led to the window, where from a low chair he could look out on the bare and bleak-looking landscape. But, though the body was recovering some of its old strength and vigour, the brain seemed to be either dead or asleep.

No glance of recognition came into his once keen, loving eyes when Cora or his sister spoke to him; even the power of rational coherent speech had left him, and when he attempted to break the silence that had become almost a second nature to him, the sounds he uttered carried no meaning to the minds of his listeners. Only once had he shown any emotion or exhibited any sign of preference or aversion towards any single creature, and this was when Lance

Latimer, after numerous and repeated requests, was allowed to visit him.

Then, it might have been the sound of his voice that carried some painful impression to the deadened senses, it might have been the mere animal instinct of fear such as that to which all idiots and insane people are liable; but, let the cause be what it would, the suffering man shrank back in his chair with an expression of wild terror on his face, and holding his hands up as though to ward off some threatened blow, at the same time uttering such incoherent cries of fear, that those around him hastened to send away the pale, conscience-stricken cause of the old man's emotion.

The marquis had a relapse after this, and the doctors, when they learnt the particulars, gave the most stringent orders that Mr. Latimer should not be admitted to his kinsman's presence again, and that everything that could agitate the patient should be most scrupulously kept from him.

Latimer himself was startled when he saw before him the wreck which his own hands had made, and the dread which had been lulled to rest till now by his seeming security, came back to him with redoubled force—the dread that if the marquis lived, he would one day regain the use of his mental faculties, and then—Latimer dared not think of what his own position would be if his fears were realised.

This anxiety was unreasonable, he vainly told himself, for had not the decision of the men of science been, that the brain could never regain its power, unless the sufferer was subjected to an operation so perilous that they could not urge his friends to sanction it, and no one knew better than Lance Latimer how Lady Bellinda shrank from authorising what, though it might restore her brother's mental faculties, was quite as likely to hasten his death.

So the marquis was nursed and tended, his sister and Cora hoping against hope that nature would perform some miracle on his behalf, and Latimer, isolated, and yet giving himself some of the airs of the future lord of the castle, paid and received visits, and with his ally Lady Beverley, let all the world about them know that he must one day be Lord de Wreydon, and that, if justice and the acknowledged intentions of the now helpless peer were carried out, he would also be the possessor of the broad lands of the Lysters.

Fleming Cadbury heard much of this, and though his face darkened when Latimer's name was mentioned in his hearing, he made no observation about him. His first intention of arresting the man and trying to compel him to account for Juanita's disappearance, had not been carried out.

Calm reflection, and the recollection of the way in which Lady Bellinda had received his story, convinced him that no unprejudiced person would look at the case from the same point of view that he did, and consequently he resolved to watch and wait, believing that if Juanita was alive she would communicate with him, and if dead, some proof of her death and of the manner in which it had been brought about would transpire.

Thus he waited, but no news came. The woman had disappeared, how he could only conjecture, and thus he lived and waited, feverishly anxious, the delay telling upon him in many ways and utterly destroying that bright, breezy cheerfulness that he had once seemed to carry about with him wherever he went.

All was changed now. The rectory looked dull and dismal, the rector himself was gloomy and taciturn, leaving most of his parish work to his curate, shunning his friends and indulging in long dreary walks over the hills and the wild moorland, coming back at night often drenched to the skin with rain and so exhausted and weary that his limbs would scarce bear him to his own threshold.

Only the companionship and sympathy of one friend did he seek at this trying time, and that was Mrs. Smith, Walter's mother. She also, poor woman, was out of humour with the times.



She had driven Cora from her, and now she resented the girl's absence.

"It is for her to seek me, not for me to go and beg pardon of her," she told herself in her resentment and pride, "her love has cost me my son, and it may, I believe, cost him his life. No, I will not seek her, and she may be grateful if I do not hate her."

Such was Mrs. Smith's frame of mind when a new element of danger to the girl whom her son loved, made itself manifest.

### CHAPTER XXX.

#### AN IMPUDENT CLAIM.

But when to mischief mortals bend their will  
How soon they find its instruments of ill.

"I WANT to see the Markis of Lamorna! I must see the Markis of Lamorna! He has got my child! The child I lost seventeen year ago. Where is he? Where is she? Take me to my che-ild!"

Such is the torrent of words uttered in a loud tone and accompanied with much dramatic action, that falls upon the ears of the astonished footman who opens the great hall door of Lamorna Castle to a woman who has stormed at the bell and demanded admission with astounding energy.

She was a tall, dark, sometime handsome, but now dissipated-looking woman of four or five and forty, and she kept on repeating her words again and again as though determined that all the world should hear them. For this had been part of the pre-arranged plot to ruin Cora in the eyes of those who looked upon gentle blood and ancient lineage as essential qualifications in those who were to be honoured by their notice, or admitted to their society.

To come quietly, and frighten Lady Bellinda, and perhaps be bought off with a certain amount of hush money, would be of no use whatever. This would but inflict secret mortification, and Latimer and Lady Beverley were determined to shame the object of their hatred beyond recovery and before all the world.

Succeed or fail, if they threw an unlimited quantity of mud, some of it must stick, they reasoned, and hence the plan of attack had been ordered in this essentially vulgar manner.

"The old dragon would never, under any circumstances, let the girl be taken away to live among common people; of that we may be quite sure," her ladyship had remarked to her confederates, "consequently the more objectionable the woman may be who comes to claim her the better for our real purpose."

The loud coarse voice of the strange woman had attracted the attention of other servants passing through the hall, and the man who opened the door, regaining the power of speech, said:

"His lordship has been ill for many weeks past, nobody can see him. Haven't you mistaken the place you've come to?"

"Mistaken the place I have come to," in derision; "no, I haven't. You've got a young girl here. It's no use denyin' of it, for I know you have. She's called Cora, but her real name is Judy; she's my daughter, I want her. And here I'm a goin' to stop till I get her, so there."

She had meanwhile pushed her way past the servant, walked into the hall, and seated herself in a huge chair near the glowing fire. The servants were puzzled; one suggested fetching Mr. Latimer, but the old servants were jealous of the new, would-be master, and Mrs. Ransome, the housekeeper, appearing on the scene, promptly settled the discussion by saying:

"No; I'll go to my lady. Keep that woman here, don't let her out of your sight till I come back again."

"All right, old girl; no fear of me, I'm not a goin' till I take my daughter along with me. Won't any of you go and tell my daughter, Cora, as they call her, that her mother's here? Have you none of you any feelin's for a mother's love." And she rocked herself to and fro and

tried to squeeze out a tear or two, but not with any very signal success.

Not one of the crowd of domestics stirred, however. The general impression among them was that this woman was mad or tipsy or both; she might or might not have lost a child in the years gone by, but that she had no more claim to Cora Lytton than she had to one of themselves they were one and all convinced. In point of fact, Sponsons had not been judicious in the choice of his instrument, and the woman, like all bad actresses, had buried her part, and had made a mere farce of what should have been a near approach to tragedy.

It was a curious scene. The spacious hall hung with armour, and pictures and trophies of the chase, the great fire blazing in the open grate, and the hall porter's chair filled now by the strange woman who sat talking in a loud, vehement manner to the crowd of astonished, half-frightened servants, who stood curiously watching her. At length Mrs. Ransome returned and spoke a few words to the butler, who then advanced to the woman and said:

"My lady will see you."

The woman rose with alacrity to follow him, but on the way Markham said on his own responsibility:

"'Twill be best to be quiet and not talk too loud to my lady, she's not accustomed to people taking—" with hesitation—"taking liberties with her."

"Liberties!" echoed the woman in a shrill angry voice; "if she calls that a liberty she may call it so and she may like it or lump it, I don't care; I don't think no better of her because she lives in a big house and has funkeys with powdered hair and silk stockings and stuck-up butlers," with a toss of her head, "to wait on her. I wanta my daughter, that's all I wanta."

Markham discreetly kept silence after this. He would have bitten a piece of his tongue off sooner than have called forth such a tirade. So he opened the door of the peacock drawing-room and announced—

"The person, my lady."

Lady Bellinda was alone. Small and thin and wizened, she was but as a child in size compared with the large, bloated, "fast" looking woman before her. But her cold grey eye and her pride of race, added to the habit of command that was natural to her, made her seem somewhat formidable even to this unblinking creature.

"You can leave the room, Markham; but attend to me directly I ring," she said, calmly.

Then looking at the woman, she added in cool deliberate tones:

"You can be seated."

"Thank you for nothing," and in an insolent manner the woman threw herself into a chair.

"What is your name?" asked Lady Bellinda in the same cool quiet tones.

"What's my name got to do with you?" impudently.

"Nothing," calmly; "nor can I suppose that you have either. My servants told me you wished to see my brother, you cannot do so, he is too ill to see anyone. If you have anything that you wish to tell me as his representative you can do so, if not, you can go."

"I don't care who I tell so long as I get what I want. I lost my child seventeen year ago, your brother the markis found her, he's kept her all this time; now I want her back again."

"You know that you must prove your claim, I suppose," coldly.

"Prove it; of course I can prove it. I can tell you what she had on at the time, leastways as well as I can remember after all this time; she's faine safe enough, and if she's like I was at her age she ain't had looking and will be able to earn a tidy sum to keep her mother with. I s'pose you've given her an education, haven't you?"

Poor Lady Bellinda began to feel that she could not cope with this woman single-handed. She did not believe her story for one solitary moment. The child when her brother rescued her had been in the charge of a French bonne,

and this woman could never have kept such a servant.

It was a bare-faced attempt at imposture, she had not the shadow of a doubt, but all the same, coming in such a form she recognised her own weakness and the absolute necessity for some man to rely upon for advice and help. Her first thought was of Fleming Cadbury; her own coolness to him had quite escaped her recollection, and without answering the woman she touched the bell at her side and said to Markham who answered the summons:

"Order a groom to ride over to Mr. Cadbury as fast as he can and ask him to come to me at once. Let Mr. Cadbury take the groom's horse, the man can return on foot. Let no time be lost. Meanwhile take this woman to the housekeeper's room till I send for her."

"Which he won't do; cause I won't go," asserted the woman, wriggling herself more firmly into her chair as though she meant to become a part of it.

"You can go or you can be flung out of the house and never admitted to it again, whichever you prefer," said Lady Bellinda, roused at last, and her grey eyes flashing dangerously. "Markham, see that I am obeyed; turn her out if there is the least struggle!" And Lady Bellinda opened a door and walked into the next drawing-room, not choosing to be present at any scuffle.

But her heart was heavy. Troubles seemed to be coming thick and fast on every side. Her brother was powerless, and yet, while he lived, her own hands were tied. It was strange too that all these years should have passed without any claim being made to the girl who had been adopted as one of the family, and now, when they were to a certain extent powerless to defend her, a woman of this low type should come forward with a trumped-up claim of parentage.

"There is the hand of an enemy at work in it," thought her ladyship, bitterly; "if only Walter were here he should marry the child, then she and I would have a strong arm to protect us; but I will guard her for him. I will spend half my fortune sooner than abandon her to such a woman as this."

Her reflections were interrupted by the object of her solicitude, who came into the room looking troubled and puzzled.

"What is the matter, auntie?" she asked, anxiously. "Nurse Barlow seems to be beside herself with some strange idea she has suddenly become possessed of. She has been embracing me, and crying and laughing by turns. Declaring that something—I can't imagine what—cannot be; then, that she is a fool for her pains to have believed it for a moment. Indeed she contradicts herself half-a-dozen times over, and I cannot discover what she is really talking about. You look as though something were the matter too, auntie. What is it? Not my father—" in sudden alarm.

"No, dear, he is just the same."

"Thank heaven!" and the girl sat down to recover herself. The greater terror had for the moment eclipsed any smaller anxiety, and the most terrible form in which grief and trouble could come to them always seemed to the girl's loving heart to be the death of the marguis.

Lady Bellinda was on the horns of a dilemma. She would like to have talked with Fleming Cadbury before telling Cora of the presence of that objectionable woman and the claim she made upon her, but it was quite clear that Cora could not long be kept in ignorance of it, and at any moment the violent creature might burst in upon them and declare to the girl that she was her mother.

So she began, with some delicacy, to prepare Cora for hearing of the startling claim that had been set up, but she had not proceeded far enough for the girl to be able to understand the drift of her remarks, when what she had been dreading actually occurred, the door was flung open, and the strange woman coming in like a rush of wind, flew to Cora's side, and clasping her tightly in her arms as though she meant to squeeze the very life and breath out of her, exclaimed:

"My che-ild! My che-ild! The che-ild I

lost! the che-ild I've been robbed of! My che-ild! Kiss your mother, my dear, who'll never, never spare you again."

But Cora, terrified as she was, felt more disgusted than afraid, for the woman's hot breath, charged with the odour of years of intemperance, rushed over her face and seemed to choke and sicken her, and she drew back in shuddering aversion, and with an appealing glance at Lady Bellinda, said:

"This cannot be my mother! Oh, auntie, do send her away!"

The woman had relaxed her grasp when she saw the expression of loathing on the girl's face, and a look of malignant hatred came over her own, as she realised the immeasurable gulf between this pure lovely creature and herself.

That she would ever gain possession of her was not to be expected, her employer had held out no hope of such a result, nor indeed, had he made any provision for it.

The woman's instructions were to be as noisy and demonstrative as possible in setting up her claim to Cora as her daughter, and to cause all the annoyance she could, and her reception had acted as a new and powerful stimulant to do all the evil in her power, though she certainly needed nothing more than the promise of liberal payment to induce her to do her worst.

"So I can't be your mother, and I'm to be sent away, am I?" she screamed, seating herself and beginning to fan her hot face with a soiled handkerchief. "I ain't grand enough to be your mother, I s'pose? That's it, isn't it? Children picked up from under cart wheels must have duchesses for their mothers, now-a-days, I s'pose. But I can tell you what you'd got on when I lost you. I've told the woman they call Nurse Barlow, and she says I'm right; she ought to know, seeing she was the first to undress you."

Cora shivered, while Lady Bellinda, as though speaking to herself, said:

"I wish Barlow would not let her chattering tongue run away with her as she does, no doubt it is some of her babble that has brought this annoyance upon us. However, it will soon be over. I wish Cadbury would come."

Meanwhile Cora was looking at the strange woman with troubled wonder. There was no sympathy or affection rising in her heart for this loud, vulgar creature, on the contrary, she felt towards her a singular repulsion such as she had never felt for any woman before, and she asked in a shocked, hesitating tone:

"If I am a daughter of yours, why did you not seek me before?"

"Why," with an indignant toss of the head, "why indeed? Because I didn't know where you was."

"And how did you find me out now?"

"Never your mind, I was told and here I am to take you away as soon as you are ready, and the sooner the better; they won't want you here any longer when they find you've no grand stuck-up folks belonging to you."

Cora glanced at Lady Bellinda. She felt as if she were in a dream; her whole soul rose in rebellion against this preposterous claim upon her. Go with this woman! She would as soon think of walking into the Wreydon.

Poor girl! she was half wild with fear, for she did not know what power the law might give to a person making such a claim, nor was her mind at all clear as to how the claim could be shown to be without foundation even if it was really the impudent fabrication it seemed to be.

"You will never go with this woman, my dear, whether her assertion is true or false concerning your parentage," Lady Bellinda said, with the quiet accent of conscious power. "I have sent for Mr. Cadbury, who will be here shortly, and in the meantime we may as well hear some of this wonderful story. You say that this lady is your daughter," turning to the woman; "is the man whom you would call her father still living?"

"Law! How should I know," with an impudent glance. "I ain't seen him since she was born."

"Not seen your husband?" in a tone of contemptuous surprise.

"Husband!" with a coarse laugh, "I ain't got no husband, I never had one; she's a 'love child,' that's what they call 'em."

Cora's cheek became crimson, her heart throbbed as though it would shake her to pieces with its rapid pulsations, for at this instant while this unblushing statement was made in a loud tone, Fleming Cadbury came into the room, and both he and the servant who announced him must have heard it.

"Go to your room," said Lady Bellinda to the trembling girl, "and remain there till I come to you; we will deal with this woman as she deserves."

The girl was about to obey, but the intruder sprang up and barred her exit from the room.

"You don't go out of my sight," she exclaimed, roughly; "you belong to me, and it's me that's to say what you shall do and what you shan't."

The girl shrank away with loathing from the hand that was about to be laid upon her, and Fleming Cadbury, astonished and very far from comprehending the scene, said:

"Take my arm, Miss Lyster," and opening another door he led the girl from the room.

He returned a few seconds later, and looking at the strange woman with a keen, scrutinising glance, said:

"I thought so, we have met before."

Then he turned to talk in low tones to Lady Bellinda, while the woman with a suddenly scared face, thinking herself unobserved, slunk stealthily towards the door. Her hand was upon the handle when the rector sprang to his feet and was at her side.

"No, you mustn't leave us in such a hurry," he said, with a grim smile, "you came uninvited, but can't go without leave; you have to prove your story and we mean to take care of you while you do so."

"It's all true!" she exclaimed, desperately, with an oath.

"There shall be the fullest investigation," he replied, sternly, "you shall have justice, absolute justice."

Then he rang the bell, while the woman wondered whether they meant to treat her as a guest or as a prisoner.

(To be Continued.)

## ENGLISH IVY.

ENGLISH ivy will succeed better in our dry, warm rooms than almost any other plant, and requires very little care. If two-year-old plants are secured they will begin to run after that time. It is not necessary to give the plant a large pot or to change this often. Good, rich loam and plenty of water are all that is required. Move the pot as little as possible. Once a week wipe off all the leaves carefully with a large wet sponge, fastened to a long stick. As the ivy does not require sunlight it can be grown anywhere, and makes a charming frame-work for doors, windows and pictures. Sometimes it is planted in a large tub and trained up a stairway, forming a mass of green foliage from the hall below to the floor above.

## FOOTE, THE COMEDIAN.

SAMUEL FOOTE, dramatist and actor, who flourished during the century last past, was, probably, the most successful mimic that ever appeared upon the English stage. He had an early predilection for the dramatic art, but met with no success until his marvellous powers of mimicry were put forth to the bringing of the notabilities of the day upon the stage. Once launched upon this specialty his success was wonderful. He wrote his own plays, and in his impersonation of well-known characters his

make-ups, and his general take-offs, were so perfect that it often happened that spectators were ready to swear that the originals themselves were moving and speaking before them. Had he been content to confine his mimicry within the bounds of reason, he might have counted his friends on all hands, and in all ranks of society; but he must needs seize upon the quaint peculiarities of good men, to bring them into ridicule, thus making for himself enemies who did not fail to hunt and haunt him when they could.

As an instance of his wondrous powers as a mimic, perhaps there is none better on record than the story of the Dublin printer and publisher, Faulkner. Mr. Faulkner was an original, both in his character and in his dress, and no man of his day and generation was better known—at least by the people among whom he moved. While Foote was acting in Dublin, he introduced the character of Mr. Faulkner into one of his plays, and took the impersonation thereof upon himself; and so closely did he imitate the man, giving his broad peculiarities so nearly to the life, that the poor printer could not appear upon the street without meeting with gibes and jeers upon all hands. He appealed to Foote in vain. When the actor found what a hit he had made he threw new energy and new ridicule into the impersonation.

At length Faulkner determined to have the actor hissed from the stage, and to that end he summoned the boys of his printing office—a large number of them—and bade them to collect the boys of other like establishments, the whole army of them to take possession of the gallery of the theatre on that night, he furnishing the tickets of admission. Said he to his own followers:

"Now mark: The moment Mr. Foote appears and begins to make fun of me—when he begins to hold me up to ridicule—on that moment do you hiss and howl: and do you keep it up until you have driven him from the stage. If the police should think of molesting you, I will be there to keep them off. They will give in to me, when I have explained."

The men and boys promised, and were in high glee. Evening came, and as the time drew near for raising the curtain in the theatre, the gallery was filled with the journeymen and diablerie of the Dublin printing offices. By-and-bye the curtain went up, and presently thereafter stepped upon the stage—

Could there be a more perfect imitation? From the old cocked hat and caroty-grey wig, down to the capacious top-boots, it was Faulkner himself! The house roared, the applause was tremendous. It is strange how men—good-hearted men, too—will delight to behold ridicule, no matter who suffers, so they go unhurt! And there stood old Faulkner himself, in propria, away back out of sight, at one of the rear doors of the gallery, waiting to intercept the policeman who should attempt to interfere with the uproar of disapprobation.

But—alas for the poor printer—not a hiss, not a show of disapproval of any kind—from his crew; but—could he believe his eyes?—could he believe his ears?—his own friends—those whom he had sent on purpose to avenge him—joined in the applause! Yes—a staid old proof-reader set the example of clapping his hands and crying, "Good! Good!" and all the others joined in.

Faulkner was confounded—entirely dumb-founded—and as soon as he could muster his energies, he crawled away home. On the following morning he repaired to his office, and summoned his crew to the sanctum, where he demanded to know why they had not kept faith with him—why they had not hissed the insolent actor, on the previous evening, at the theatre.

"Ah!" cried the old proof-reader, with a knowing wink, "ye couldn't cheat us in that way, Mr. Faulkner. We knew ye the moment ye came on to the stage, and a sorry lot we'd 'a been to 've hissed our own good master!"

And Faulkner was obliged to believe that the



honest, simple-hearted workmen had been deceived, as they professed.

But Foote was to discover that a man cannot long continue to make game of his fellows without meeting his match in the end. When he had become broken in health, and had already lost many friends, he attempted to satirise the notorious Duchess of Kingston. She turned upon him in her wrath, and heaped upon his devoted head charges and specifications of such monstrous character, that, though they were afterwards disproved, they hurried him to his grave!

### GOOD TO-DAY AS EVER.

DEAN SWIFT, having preached an assize sermon in Ireland, was invited to dine with the judges, and having in his sermon considered the use and the abuse of the law, pressed somewhat hard upon those counsellors who plead a cause which they know in their consciences to be wrong. When dinner was over, and the glass began to go round, a young barrister retorted upon the Dean, and after several altercations, the counsellor asked him, "If Satan was to die, might not a parson be found, who, for money, would preach his funeral sermon?" "Yes," said Swift. "I would gladly be the man, and would give Satan his due, as I have this day done to his children."

### GETTING WHISKY FOR A SICK WIFE.

He was a stern, austere-looking man, and when he walked into a public-house where "wines and liquors for family use" were advertised for sale, he gazed carefully around before making known his wants. Then he called the proprietor to him, and leaning over the counter, inquired in a low tone if he had any whisky he could positively recommend to families in case of sickness. The proprietor stated, in a subdued though no less confident voice, that he had. He had used it, he said, in his own family, during critical periods of illness, and he hadn't the slightest hesitation in endorsing it, even though the applicant was himself the Prince of Wales.

"I am thus particular," explained the austere man, "because it is rarely that I have anything of an intoxicating nature about my house, and never then except in cases of direst necessity." "I understand," said the liquor man, nodding approvingly; "I am a good deal that way myself, although in the business."

Then he took a bottle out of a case that stood on a high shelf, and dusting it off carefully, almost fondly, because the whisky it contained was so very rare, handed it to the man, with the remark that he might take out a search warrant and hunt through all the private cellars in the country without being able to find its superior.

"I don't know anything about it," said the stern customer, with an impatient wave of the hand—don't ever drink it myself, and can only take it on your recommendation. My wife, you see, is very bad with sore throat, and—"

"Capital thing for sore throat," said the proprietor, rolling the bottle up in a piece of brown paper. "My wife tried it for that not long ago, and it did her a world of good."

"Can't you put it in a different looking parcel?" asked the austere individual. "I don't like to be seen—"

"Oh, of course, got just the thing for it here; look like a package of thread or something of that kind," and he put it into a square paper box that fitted it exactly.

"My wife has tried everything for that throat of hers," said the austere man as he counted out the change, "and I thought maybe a little ardent spirits just as she went to bed—"

"Nothing better in the world, interrupted the supplier of family distur—we mean wines and liquors."

"You see," said the man, placing the parcel in the inside pocket of his overcoat and buttoning the coat carefully around it, "I abhor anything of an intoxicating nature, but in this case—"

"You do perfectly right," said the dealer, opening the door for him. "An ounce of whisky—I mean of prevention, is worth a pound of cure."

"She's so delicate," pursued the austere one, "she catches cold with every change of the weather, and things I wouldn't notice at all make her downright ill. I am afraid she's not long for this world," with a pious laugh.

"The weather is very bad for delicate constitutions," suggested the liquor man.

"Especially for hers," added the person of austerity, about to step out. Then he turned as with a sudden thought and said, "I suppose if I give it to her with hot water and a little sugar it would be all the better, wouldn't it?"

"Oh, much better. Don't forget the hot water and sugar."

The liquor dealer turned to us with a smile as the man left, and said:

"Wonder if that man thinks he is humbugging anybody. But that is the way some folks get their whisky."

"Wasn't that story about his sick wife correct?" we asked.

"Sick wife! sick fiddlesticks. He hasn't any wife, and never had, but he doesn't know that I know it. I meet with lots of such cases; men who come here to buy whisky to drink on the sly, endeavouring to veil it under some such thin pretence as that man employed."

### STORY-TELLERS.

OCCASIONALLY, an anecdote or joke, well told, sets off conversation admirably, or breaks the ice of formal silence; but the confirmed storyteller is a nuisance and a bore. Yet it would be hard to say whether such as these are duller than those who make interrogatives for the staple of their conversation. Admirable as a thirst for information undoubtedly is, human patience cannot bear an indefinite amount of cross-examination, especially when it suspects that the questions are merely put for the sake of finding something to say. Those people are especially worrying who are constantly bringing in some pet word or expression, with or without an intelligible meaning. How obnoxious are those who end ninety-nine out of every hundred sentences with "you know."

Equally dreary and irritating is the repetition of some terse reply such as "really," "exactly," or just so." We once had an acquaintance who nearly drove us to distraction in a three days' visit by replying to all remarks, "You think so?" To such a pitch were we finally wrought up that it was with difficulty we refrained from snappishly retorting, "No, I don't!"

### COULDN'T MAKE HIM UNDERSTAND.

SHE WAS a stylish young lady of about eighteen years, and to accommodate a friend she took the baby out for an airing. She was wheeling it up and down, when an oldish man, very deaf, came along and inquired for a certain person supposed to live in that street. She nearly yelled her head off trying to answer him, and he looked around, and caught sight of the baby, and said, "Nice child, that. I suppose you feel proud of him?"

"It isn't mine?" she yelled at him.

"Boy, eh? Well, he looks just like you."

"It isn't mine!" she cried again, but he nodded his head, and continued:

"Twins, eh? Where's the other one?"

Despairing of making him understand by word of mouth, she pointed to the baby, at herself, and then shook her head.

"Yes, yes, I see. T'other twin in the

house. Their father is fond of them, of course?"

She turned from the perambulator, and hurried the other way, but he followed, and asked:

"Do they kick about much at nights?"

"I tell you 'tain't mine!" she shouted, looking very red in the face.

"I think you're wrong there," he answered.

"Children brought up on a bottle are apt to pine and die."

She started on a run for the gate, but before she had opened it, he came up and asked:

"Have to spank 'im once in a while, I suppose?"

She made about twenty gestures in half a minute, and he helped the perambulator through the gate, and said:

"Our children were all twins, and I'll send my wife down to give you some advice. You see—"

But she picked up a flower-pot and flung it at him. He jumped back, and as she entered the house, he called out:

"Hope insanity won't break out among the twins."

### PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

#### THE DRAMA.

#### NEW SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE.

"SADLER'S WELLS," so long the home of the legitimate Drama under Messrs. Phelps and Greenwood, has been purchased and entirely rebuilt by Mrs. Bateman, late Lessee of the Lyceum Theatre. The changes made are so remarkable that Sadler's Wells may now lay claim to be one of the largest and most conveniently-constructed London Theatres. The architect, C. J. Phipps, Esq., F.S.A., has won a deserved reputation in this special line, and, as Sadler's Wells is the twenty-third theatre for which his designs have been carried out, it is fair to believe that his large experience must have given him extraordinary advantage for the execution of this, his latest task.

The pit will seat nearly, if not quite, 1,000 persons, and, with its comfortable seats with backs, will be found most commodious. The entrance is by a doorway and corridor 6 feet wide (in Arlington Street) level with the street. A duplicate entrance on the opposite of the pit also opens into Arlington Street, and can be used when requisite. The gallery entrance (in the same street), 6 feet in width, leads to a stone staircase, also 6 feet wide, built in short flights, without any winding steps, and having a solid brick wall on either side. There is a duplicate staircase and entrance also for this part of the theatre, leading direct to the front row. The gallery will seat over 800 persons. The other parts of the theatre have also been carefully arranged. The pit saloon opens out of the pit entrance corridor, and is 23 feet by 13 feet, irrespective of counter room. The saloon for stalls, balcony, and family circle is immediately above the carriage drive and vestibule, is 35 feet by 23 feet, and has numerous windows, from which a view of the reservoir of the New River Company can be had. All the saloons are thoroughly ventilated and lighted by abundant windows; as are also the cloak rooms and retiring rooms throughout the building. The decorations of the building are simple and elegant.

The builders' work has been executed by Mr. Edward Nightingale. The act-drop is by Mr. J. O'Connor and represents a view of old Sadler's Wells in 1750, when the waters were in vogue, and princesses and duchesses came in sedan chairs to drink them, and when the New River was bordered by trees, and highwaymen were apt to attack visitors to the Wells, as they returned along lonely fields leading to Leicester Square. What changes may not be enumerated in this part of old London.

The theatre will be opened on the 9th of this month with the Scottish drama "Rob Roy."

Mr. Tom Taylor wrote the opening address, which will be spoken by Miss Bateman (Mrs. Crowe), who also will undertake the character of Helen Macgregor until she is called away by her provincial engagements.

### THE MOORE AND BURGESS MINSTRELS.

THE Moore and Burgess Minstrels have entered upon the fifteenth year of their successful entertainment. If we wrote a volume upon the subject we could say nothing more euphatically complimentary than the bare mention of such a fact, unprecedented as it is in the annals of public entertainments. Where else can we point to any kind of recreation which has so exactly hit the taste of the public? Some have been very popular for a few months, some have even retained the favour of the public for a year or two. But fifteen! that is a very different matter, and it is worth while to inquire why it is that Messrs. Moore and Burgess have so completely distanced all competitors. One of the chief causes of their success has been that they have at all times and under all circumstances kept up the quality of the entertainment. Let the visitor go when he will—on New Year's Day or the last of December, on the hottest day of July or the coldest day of January—he will hear of no excuses, no apologies, no falling off. Messrs. Moore and Burgess know well that one of the greatest secrets of success is to keep faith with the public—to give their patrons something first-rate of its kind; not once in a way, but always.

Another great merit has been the zealous endeavours of Mr. Burgess in superintending the business arrangements and in looking far ahead to catch the first echoes of any musical novelty. Let us, for example, recall his energy a year or so ago. Before "Les Cloches de Corneville" was produced in London, several of the prettiest songs were given by the Moore and Burgess Minstrels. This is only one instance of the desire of the management to be first in the field. Still further, we may mention as worthy of all commendation the strict rules against encores. A song is well sung, a chorus carefully rendered, a joke well told, and hey, presto! on we go to the next, and nobody is bored by having a familiar item dinned into his ears until he wishes himself in the next street. If we were to pass in review everything connected with the Moore and Burgess entertainment, we should invariably find something to praise.

Besides the many new songs in which Mr. Evans, Mr. Charles Ernest, Mr. Charles Henry, and other excellent vocalists, distinguish themselves, some of the popular ballads already known are rendered to perfection, Mr. Leslie, the popular alto, being greeted with deafening applause in the air, "Beautiful maid, white as the rose." Mr. Vernon is read also greeted in the most flattering manner after singing "The Flight of the Birds." A new artist of great merit, Mr. Ernest Linden, appears as a coloured prima donna with great success. Mr. Linden is arrayed in a magnificent costume by Worth, of Paris, and his scene is extremely amusing and effective. Herr Albert Obau, a German artiste, gives a series of Protean sketches of feminine characters; and a funny comic sketch, "Circumstances Alter Cases," ends the attractive programme, which, as usual, furnishes plentiful entertainment for a very large audience. The talents of the clever interlocutor, Mr. John R. Kemble, and the valuable services of Mr. John Hobson, as musical director, merit recognition; and we have only to add that the band and chorus are as good as ever.

### THE METROPOLITAN MUSIC HALL.

MR. LAKE has taken the Metropolitan, and as the patronage of the public was liberal to Mr. Speedy, there is no valid reason why he should lack adherents. Mr. W. Bailey is an experienced and popular caterer, and the bill of fare put forward is one likely to win favour. The Hall is well patronised, and the various items

in the long programme are received with the warmest approbation. The opening entertainments were given by the Sisters Taylor, who, in several lively duets and equally lively dances, proved themselves accomplished artistes. Mr. Richard Penny enlightened the audience with a stump speech upon the topics of the day—political, social, legal, and domestic. Mr. Woodhead substantially proves his claim to be called a musical wonder, since he not only plays well upon a number of instruments separately, but can also manipulate several at the same time. He gave a number of popular airs on the harp, concertina, and other instruments with great brilliancy. Messrs. Traynor and Wheatley fully merited the flattering reception they met. Their duet singing and comic dancing displayed uncommon talent. Mr. H. F. Juleane, in his comic song "She was no Alice," won frequent laughter and applause, and his comical laughing refrain in another song tickled the audience immensely. Mr. Frank Mordaunt displayed considerable ability as a ventriloquist. Mr. Fred Albert had a warm reception in several new songs, given as usual with great spirit, and containing keen allusions to matters of every day interest. The pretty, effective, and characteristic ballet, "Bonnie Prince Charlie; or, the Congress of Scotland's Warriors," which has been for some time a feature of the Metropolitan programme, met with all its old favour. A new grand ballet is in preparation, and remembering that the ballets at this establishment are always brilliant, we may anticipate something graceful and attractive.

MR. H. J. BYRON is engaged to appear at a series of Gaiety matinees in his own pieces, commencing with a revival of "The English Gentleman," which he played originally in the provinces, and again, by arrangement with Mr. Sothorn, at Dublin, Birmingham, Manchester, and Sheffield on tour with Mr. Bernard. The Olympic drama "Daisy Farm," not seen in London for eight years, will also be played; and, in addition, there are promised "Married in Haste," "Sir Simon Simple," &c.

MISS AUGUSTA WILTON, sister of the popular Mrs. Baneroff, was married on the 7th ult. to Mr. G. F. Bashford, late of the Scots Greys. The newly-made bride does not propose at present to leave the stage, but will continue for a time associated with her accomplished sister's company. Miss Augusta Wilton is the fifth daughter of the late Mr. Robert Playdell Wilton.

## CLARICE VILLIERS;

OR,

### WHAT LOVE FEARED.

#### CHAPTER XXXI.

##### IN STILLER WATERS.

I'll stay here, to have thee forget,  
Forgetting every home but this.

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN Aricia had been introduced to the landlady of the house her conductor gave orders for the rapid preparation of a tolerably substantial repast. Then, when they were left alone in the small parlour, he said to Aricia:

"I think it will be well that I should explain to you certain matters with regard to my action to-day."

Aricia looked at the man with some surprise. "It is for Lord Red—" he began, but he was interrupted by her.

"Not altogether. I know him well, and he is a friend—a trusted friend of mine, but it is by no means altogether, or only in his interests, that I have acted."

"But I understood you that he had asked you to aid me to escape from the Folly."

"Yes—and no. But before speaking of that, let me say that my interest in you is even greater than that which I have for Lord Red-

mond. It may well be, for I am of your people!"

"I do not understand!"

"I am a distant kinsman of your mother." Aricia gave a little joyous exclamation, and half rose from her seat, as if with the purpose of embracing the speaker. But the intention was relinquished as soon as formed, and she sank back. Why was the sudden flash of joy which the knowledge that she was less lonely in the world than she had thought had caused as suddenly extinguished?

It was that something in that dark countenance, something lurking in those piercing black eyes, something subtle, undefinable, yet unmistakably malign and dangerous, warned the girl of peril.

"I am glad to hear this," she said, but there was little enthusiasm in her tone.

"Yes, you ought to be, for I can do much for you. You have heard your mother speak of me?"

"No."

"Ah, perhaps she has done so under another name than that which to-day serves my purpose."

"My mother has never spoken to me of any of her people. I thought we were alone in the world."

"The seclusion in which you lived might well foster such an impression."

"But—but," said Aricia, hesitatingly, "we are English people, and—"

"And I am not, you would say. You cannot know much of the characteristics of your countrymen, I should think."

"You do not speak like the people I know."

"You are a sharp girl considering how little you know of the world. I am not an Englishman, as you conjecture, but I am your mother's relative nevertheless, and interested therefore in your welfare. It is for that reason, as I said, that I have lent you my aid."

Aricia did not immediately reply. She was endeavouring to realise her companion's statement and what it involved.

"I thank you," she said at last, simply.

"I can see that you are puzzled, and perhaps with some reason. I will do my best to solve all doubts and questions, only you must be similarly frank."

The girl looked at him inquiringly.

"You will see what I mean presently. In brief then let me say that I learnt first of the retreat of your mother and yourself; then when I sought the neighbourhood, I made some inquiries before venturing to call at the Folly. You know what manner of woman your mother is. Had my visit proved unwelcome to her it is hardly probable that our relationship would have saved me from the rudest and harshest of receptions."

Aricia made a movement of assent.

"It was while staying in the vicinity that I learned of your relations with Lord Everard Redmond, whom, as I have told you, I know, although in all probability neither your mother nor he would recognise me under my present cognomen."

"Is it not your real name, then?"

"Do not ask irrelevant questions, Aricia," responded her companion, with a smile. "If I do you a good turn it will concern you little to know anything which I may at present wish to keep concealed. But to resume. From what unconnected and obscure details I could gather in certain quarters, I had no doubt of the fact that a real and genuine affection existed between Redmond and yourself. Good! What are the prospects, I asked myself? What will the mother say?"

The speaker hesitated an instant, threw a quick, furtive glance at Aricia, then added:

"And what did she say?"

A flush of bright colour passed over the girl's face at the blunt question.

"She was very angry with me and with— with Redmond," she faltered.

"Of course. I guessed as much. But I could look at the affair with clearer eyes than she can. Her long seclusion from the world has warped her mind—that must be so."



He paused, apparently for Aricia's assent. "Yes; I do not think my mother is like most other people," she replied, with naive simplicity. "But then I know myself so little of the world."

"You have made your first step into it to-day, Aricia," was the assuring reply, "and you will not find it an unpleasant place. Ah, no! not for the young and fair."

He bowed with overdone gallantry as he spoke, and again, in spite of her desire to think well of this new made friend, the oblique glance of his dark eye filled the girl with a mysterious dread.

"But I must get on with my tale, for time presses," he resumed. "Where was I? Ah! I remember. What will the mother say? I ask myself. I see that answer is hopeless. I see, too, that two hearts will be severed, two lives blighted by—yes, it may as well be spoken—by the whim of a madwoman."

Aricia made an indignant gesture, and half rose as if to interrupt the speaker.

"Ah, calm yourself, my child," he said, "I do not apply the epithet in derogation of my relative, but as a mere assertion of fact. Well, let that pass. I saw that the course I was called upon to take was one which should smooth the way for a union between Lord Redmond and yourself, a thing to which I think neither will offer much objection."

Again that peculiar semi-sinister glance at the girl's countenance. Aricia did not catch it this time. Her face was flushed with a rosy tinge of consciousness; her eyes were downcast.

"So I said to myself," her companion proceeded, "I will not waste time or breath in ineffectual efforts to persuade Mrs. Dornton to give her consent. I will adopt a better plan. I will act the part of a beneficent genius and bring the young folks together."

"And so you went to see Everard?" cried Aricia, joyfully.

"Indeed, I did nothing of the kind." "But what did you say on our meeting? And the letter—Everard's letter; he gave you that?"

The stranger burst into a guttural laugh. "Ah, concerning that I have nothing at present to say, save that I resorted to a harmless ruse in the furtherance of your happiness—yours and Redmond's. You will both forgive me."

"I do not know what you mean." "You are a very Saint Simplicity, Aricia. Ah, well, you will know and approve by-and-by. Be content to let me learn that Everard will soon be by your side, that is to say, unless any accidental cause delay him for a time. Meanwhile you will be safe here with Mrs. Pryne."

"You will not leave me here alone?" queried Aricia in some dismay, for although she felt a fear of this man, a repulsion at his presence for which she could not account, still he did not seem an absolute stranger, and then too was he not a relative?

"Yes, it is necessary that I should do so. You will be perfectly safe until Redmond's arrival. All your wants will be attended to—all your commands obeyed by Mrs. Pryne. Yet stay, you may require to make some purchases. Perhaps your wardrobe requires supplementing. Have you any money?"

"No." "It was the first time that her poverty had struck the girl."

"Ah, we must provide for that. You will not want much. It will be better that I shall give it you in gold."

He drew a portmanteau from his pocket, and taking twenty sovereigns therefrom held them out to the girl. Aricia made a gesture of rejection.

"Tut! tut! child, why should you scruple about taking them? I'm your relative and am engaged in furthering your interests."

But Aricia shook her head.

"Ah, well, you will come to other views, perhaps. Besides, your costume is not particularly fashionable. You must look your best when your

lover comes, you know. If you want a hint or two about any little matter of this kind Mrs. Pryne will, I doubt not, be happy to assist you."

He stepped across the room as he spoke, and placed the gold on the mantel-shelf in a tiny pile.

"Now I must leave you, but it is in order that I may still work for you, for you and Redmond. And first I shall endeavour to soften your mother's anger and opposition. To this end it is necessary that I learn from you as much as possible of her ways of life and thought, for it is many—many years since I met my cousin, and the lapse of time changes us all."

Then Aricia, assisted by his questioning, related the principal facts of the dull course of life which she and her mother led at the Folly. When it appeared that she had no more to tell her companion arose.

"Assure Redmond that I am working in your cause. But you know—none better—how hard Mrs. Dornton is. It may be long before it is possible to get her to see the attachment of you and Redmond for each other in the right light, therefore—here he smuck his voice to an emphatic whisper—"it is my advice that he marry you speedily. It is the only safe course for either. If your mother prove inexorable, she will leave no means untried to discover your retreat. If she find you she will carry you back to the dull old house, and your love-dream will be dead for ever. But if you are Redmond's bride all will be well. Mrs. Dornton must then resign herself to the inevitable. You will tell your lover this?"

"How can I do that?" queried Aricia, with a burning blush.

"If you do not you sacrifice the chance of your own happiness. It is because I believed you to be both brave and true to yourself that I have aided you. Good-bye."

As he spoke he advanced towards Aricia, and taking her hand, bent forward as if about to kiss her brow. But the girl shrank back suddenly with a repugnance so unmistakable that he turned away suddenly and left the room.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### WIGHTED.

What wouldst thou with me,  
A feeble girl who has not long to live—  
Whose heart is broken? Seek another wife.  
LONGFELLOW.

In spite of the good fortune which had befallen him, Lord Boscawen did not seem very much more happy than when he occupied the humble position of Mr. Villiers's secretary. He was one of those men who consider that nothing has been gained if some darling hope of their hearts still remain unachieved.

And even the advantages of Boscawen's new position, while they exerted an immense influence on the mind of Mr. Villiers, did not tell for anything with Clarice, whilst the duties which that position involved prevented the constant pursuit of the wooing which the young man considered of vital consequence.

However true the old axiom that "absence makes the heart grow fonder," it could not apply, as Boscawen reasoned, to a heart not yet gained. So the young man oscillated about between three points. Those were Tremawr Manor, Elwood, the Cumberland seat of the Calderfields, and London.

Love drew Boscawen to the first, filial duty took him to the second, and pleasure or some stronger motive was the attraction of the metropolis. The usual result of a divided fealty occurred in at least one quarter. The Marquis of Calderfield considered, perhaps with justice, that his claims upon his newly-found son's filial regard and attention should be paramount. For the first few days of their united life such was indeed the case. But Boscawen speedily slackened in his attention. Upon various excuses he absented himself for more or less lengthened periods from Elwood and his father's society.

The old noble was a man of temper far too proud to remark this. His heart yearned towards this newly-found son, who, he had hoped, would bring something of the love for which the forsaken husband had waited so long. It was not to be. The marquis had seen too much of mankind to be deceived even by so astute an individual as his son. Boscawen had, he saw, but little affection to give him, for a selfish egotism held in the heart of the young man the place which should have been occupied by nobler feelings.

So, though no word or even slightest sign of the dissatisfaction and disappointment which he felt escaped the marquis, they were none the less keen and bitter from the restraint and concealment which his pride and reticence imposed.

Captain Pleydell, whose leave had not yet expired, paid a brief visit to Elwood during the early days of Boscawen's stay there, and was received with hearty cordiality, but with a little constraint by Lord Boscawen. For some reason, inexplicable even to himself, the latter was beginning to transfer to the soldier that rooted antipathy he had felt and evinced to Lord Everard Redmond.

It is true that the frank congratulations of Pleydell upon Boscawen's accession to his good fortune should have disposed the latter favourably towards the man whose expectations he had destroyed. But such was by no means the case. Boscawen's dislike to his cousin took shape in his mind from the day on which the latter aided Clarice in the rescue of Lord Redmond, and it had grown ever since, although the marquis's son was far too much a man of the world to make himself ridiculous by any slightest display of such a feeling.

Still Boscawen did not succeed altogether in blinding the young soldier to his state of mind in regard to this matter. And if Pleydell was too frank and good-hearted to reciprocate the unworthy feeling, he was not the less unable to bring his mind to any kind of cordial relation with his cousin. This state of things did not, however, hinder the young men from journeying together from Elwood to Tremawr, whither Pleydell was going to spend the remainder of his leave of absence at Mrs. Villiers's pressing invitation, while Boscawen was well aware that he was always the welcome guest of the master of the Manor.

They found little company at the mansion, and readily dropped into that quiet home-life so pleasant at an English country house. The quiet was very marked, however, and the pleasure somewhat of a subdued cast. On previous occasions the daughter of the house had made most of its light and brightness, and few had come under the influence of Clarice Villiers, even if as a casual guest, without yielding to the fascinations of her manner. But the vivacious, happy, riant girl had become transformed in the space of a few days into a pale, sad-eyed, silent woman, and the change worked a corresponding one in the home around her.

She had told her parents of the breaking of her engagement with Lord Redmond so calmly and guardedly that they knew not whether it had been her own act or that of the young man himself. Mrs. Villiers had felt annoyed and disappointed, for she had a very high opinion of, and kindly regard for Lord Redmond.

Entirely different were the feelings with which the affair was looked at by Mrs. Villiers. That gentleman was by no means wanting in astuteness, and desired the best matrimonial engagement for his daughter that it was possible to obtain. And doubtless the son and heir of the premier marquis of England was both in point of status and of actual wealth a more desirable parti for Clarice than was the much less wealthy Lord Redmond, whose prospective rank in the peerage was also inferior.

As for the question of how his daughter's heart might be involved, that troubled Mr. Villiers but little. He took it for granted that Clarice had sufficient regard for Everard to become his wife, or she would not have contracted an engagement with him. He thought it probable



## [PERSISTENT ATTENTIONS.]

that most betrothed couples did care somewhat for each other. Perhaps, too, some married ones did.

On that point he was less certain; his own affections not being very pronounced nor his expression of them very demonstrative. Under all the circumstances it seemed to this model parent that it would be sufficiently easy for his daughter, having broken with one lover, to transfer her affections to another and more eligible one.

To the girl herself, all things appeared matters of indifference. She had fallen into a calm, undemonstrative condition, passionless apparently and characterised usually by a state of languorous inactivity and quiet, which might be either due to failing health or to disgust at life.

The mother's watchful eyes noted this condition of her daughter, and felt with a sinking of her own heart that it lay not in her power to "minister to a mind diseased," or to "pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow."

Boscawen marked this mood of Clarice also; but it did not move him to any pitiful relinquishing of his own purpose. On the contrary, his persecution of Clarice increased in intensity, and the exertion of his influence on Mr. Villiers's mind went on in a corresponding ratio. That gentleman was not long in giving an unqualified approval of the young man's suit.

"You have my very best wishes, my dear boy," he said, after one of the private conversations they held on the subject. "Nothing would please me better than to see Clarice your wife. But—but you know," and he hesitated a little, "you must get the girl's consent, though that should be no difficult matter for you."

"I am not so sure," replied he, gloomily. "I thought that when Redmond had gone Miss Villiers would have proved more reasonable. But it does not seem to be the case."

"Courage, Boscawen, you know the old proverb."

"Oh, it is not faintness of heart that will cause me to lose the field. It is that Miss

Villiers cannot be moved from her indifference, even by the most impassioned pleading."

"Well, what can I do?"

"I believe your desires will have the very greatest weight with her. It is from her very indifference to all things around her that I augur this."

"Very well, my dear fellow. You know my views, and need not question that my best offices shall be exerted on your behalf. I will speak to Clarice this very day upon the subject."

He was as good as his word.

"I do not know what to think of the girl," he said, on meeting his would-be son-in-law that evening. "She seems so devoid of interest and energy that I hardly know whether she listened to me or not. But at any rate I gave her clearly to understand my wishes on the subject, and now I must leave you to plead your own cause."

The next morning Lord Boscawen watched his opportunity and succeeded in obtaining an interview with Clarice. The girl was sitting in a quiet nook of the conservatory—always a favourite resort of hers—surrounded and half hid by the soft foliage of the dwarf palms, and the feathery frondage of the ferns.

She looked up languidly as Boscawen approached. Her eyes were lustreless, her cheeks pale, her very lips bloodless, her whole aspect and pose marked by an overwhelming dejection.

Seating himself by her side Boscawen led cautiously up to the subject nearest his heart. He spoke earnestly and well, for on this one thing at least he was in earnest—worldly success, rank and wealth seemed as nothing in comparison with the possession of this woman. Clarice lifted her heavy eyes and looked at the young man with a strange, vague stare.

"What would you have of me, Lord Boscawen?" she asked, wearily.

"Your love, Miss Villiers; your heart—your hand!" was the impassioned reply.

Clarice gave a little strange, bitter laugh.

"My love!" she said. "I have none to give. My heart—it is dead; dust and ashes. My hand— Yes, papa has spoken to me about that. Why should I disobey him? I can die—die slowly and surely under a husband's roof as in my childhood's home, which it would seem a parent desires me to leave. My hand!" she repeated, with a strange, wild expression in her eyes. "Of what value is that without heart—without love?"

An exultant look came to Boscawen's face.

"That is all I would ask of you now, Miss Villiers—Clarice," he replied, impetuously. "Give me but the pledge that you will become my wife. I will win your love by my unflinching devotion. It will be won—will surely be won."

Without another word Clarice extended her hand. Boscawen took it with a tender clasp. The hand was deathly cold, but in his exultation he did not note that omen.

Clarice's eyes were fixed upon his face, still with that peculiar regard which seemed to denote a strange mental apathy mixed with passionate regrets.

"No," she replied, "you can never win that for it is dead; and no words, no act of yours can ever warm it to life again. It matters but little what may be my lot until the grave closes over me, and if you shall continue to desire so vain a possession as a wife who has no love to give, it may be that I will not always struggle against what seems fate."

The young man's face lit up exultingly.

"Not yet," Clarice went on. "Be pitiful to me, Lord Boscawen. The world permits its people time to bury their dead before it asks them to again plunge into its business or its gaiety. Shall I be denied a similar grace? Surely that cannot be! Give me, then, a space in which to mourn vanished hopes and a dead love, and after I will listen to you."

As Clarice ended, she turned and left the room with hurried, unequal steps.

(To be Continued.)





[A HEARTLESS COQUETTE.]

## UNDER A LOVE CHARM;

OR,

### A SECRET WRONG.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

*"Christine's Revenge; or, O'Hara's Wife,"**"The Mystery of His Love; or, Who**Married Them?" &c., &c.*

#### CHAPTER IX.

##### ATHELSTANE DISTURBED

"Prophet," said I, "thing of evil,  
Prophet still, if bird or devil,  
Take thy beak from out my heart  
And take thy form from off my door."  
Said the raven, "Nevermore."

ONE of the men-servants intoxicated, suffering with delirium tremens! Surely that must have been the natural explanation of the terrible noise which the wretched rascal was making? And yet it was not so very loud a noise; it was rather like the utterances of some evil spirit—the words hissed and growled through the keyhole, and the mystery of it was that the infuriated wretch seemed, according to the dreadful threats he used, to be athirst for the very life of Athelstane Rodney.

"Ring your bells, stamp with your feet, call for your hired slaves. None of them shall save you from me, Athelstane Rodney! I will crush you as I would crush a wasp to death—to death! I will trample on you so that your mother shall not know your dead face. You have ruined my whole life!"

At that moment came hurrying footsteps, a loud, unearthly yell rent the air. There was the sound outside of a violent scuffle. Athelstane no longer had a doubt that it was a drunken servant who was causing all the dis-

turbance. He called out "Parker?" and knocked against the door with his foot, for he felt sure that he heard Parker's voice in the corridor.

"Parker, what is the matter? Open the door."

And the voice of Parker answered:

"It is a tipsy tramp, sir, that has come up the back stairs into the house. Now they have carried him down, and I will see that he is taken to the police-station at Penniston."

"Open the door," said Athelstane, giving the door another impatient kick, but there was no answer.

Athelstane heard the sound of hastily retiring feet. He called out again to Parker, but a blank, utter silence now reigned in the corridor. It was a rather lonely corridor between two thick walls. Only two other rooms opened on it besides that of Athelstane Rodney. Both of these rooms were furnished with the heavy, cumbersome wardrobes and ghostly four-post bedsteads of the last century.

Neither of them were ever tenanted unless Wolvermoor happened to be crammed full of guests; this was not now the case. Lord and Lady Melrose, with their two daughters and her ladyship's resident physician, were the only actual visitors in the house. The gay and splendid guest chambers of Wolvermoor were situated at the other side of the mansion, in the north wing, consequently it happened that this passage, in which Athelstane's room was situated, was exceptionally quiet.

Athelstane went again and rang his bell; it was Parker's place to answer it. In a couple of minutes Athelstane heard footsteps outside, and his door was tried.

"It's locked, sir," said the voice of Parker.

"I know it is. Did not I tell you to unlock it just now? Some rascal has locked me in."

"The key is gone, sir," said Parker, hastily, "and the dinner gong will sound in five minutes. I will fetch one that will open it," and Parker hurried off.

Athelstane had completed his toilette; he was hungry, for he had not broken his fast since

the morning, and he was desperately impatient to see Clemence, and to inquire if she had been alarmed by the cries of the tipsy tramp.

"Make haste, Parker!" shouted Athelstane, and in a couple of minutes Parker returned with a key from another door which fitted that of Athelstane.

Parker put it in and opened the door.

"Where have they put the fellow, Parker?" asked the young gentleman.

Parker was a small, pale, wiry individual, with grey eyes oddly set in his head, a long nose, whiskerless cheeks, black hair, fast turning grey. He had been the confidential valet of Sir Robert for twenty years, and had known Athelstane and Horace since the days of their childhood. He had always been and still was, indeed, a perfectly honest and mild tempered, and eminently respectable little man, fond of reading during his leisure hours—a thoroughly reliable person was "little Parker," as Sir Robert called him. The baronet would have trusted him with all the money in the Bank of England.

"Where have they put the ruffian?" repeated Athelstane. "I hope the ladies were not afraid of the fearful row he made."

Little Mr. Parker stared in blankest amaze at Athelstane.

"What man, sir? There has not been a drunken tramp here, Mr. Athelstane. How could one possibly get in here?"

"But you were outside, Parker, in the very height of the disturbance. I heard your voice, and I asked what was the matter. You said a drunken man had got in, and that you would make the men-servants take him to the police station at Penniston."

"I, sir? No, sir, indeed, I told you nothing of the kind. I certainly heard your bell ring. I came, but at the end of the passage you called to me and said, 'It is a mistake, Parker, I took up the bell-rope in the sleeve of my coat,' then I went down again, Mr. Athelstane. Presently I heard you ring again. I came up again, but

found the door locked as you know, that is all I can tell you, Mr. Athelstane."

The little man's face expressed a wonder and perplexity that were ludicrous. Athelstane looked at him gravely for a moment, and then broke into a shout of laughter.

"I have not been hoaxing you, Parker," he said. "Not at all; it is 'true as the stars' that I heard someone furiously trying the handle of my door. Imagine my surprise when I found it was firmly locked. Then some wretch uttered the most abominable words such as one only hears spoken by 'roughs' of the lowest class, in the worst streets of large towns. The next thing was that I heard your voice distinctly. I spoke to you, and you answered me!"

Parker shook his head.

"Your voice, Parker, most distinctly informed me that a drunken tramp had found his way up the back staircase, and that you would have him taken to the police-station. I heard the sound of many footsteps, and a violent scuffle."

"I heard nothing, sir," said Parker, "until you rang, then, as I told you, I came up the stairs at the foot of this corridor, when your voice called out to me that you had caught hold of the bell in mistake. The second time I came I found the door locked as you know, and the key gone."

"It is like a story of enchantment," said Athelstane, with another laugh. "But let us find out if a tramp has found entrance here, and who turned him out. If nothing of the kind has happened, why then it is a hoax got up among the men-servants. If I could find out who was concerned in it, Sir Robert would send them everyone packing."

"I know he would," said little respectable-looking Parker, rubbing his forehead thoughtfully, "but we won't trouble Sir Robert about it yet, Mr. Athelstane, not until I have inquired."

"All right," said Athelstane.

Then the gong sounded, and he hastened downstairs to the oak parlour where the dinner was laid on the table. Lord Melrose and Doctor Finnean and Miss Celia Melrose were present, also a tall, pale, melancholy, delicate-looking gentleman in black, with something antique and behind the age in the style of his attire. This gentleman extended his hand to Athelstane, signed and said:

"You look as untamed as ever, Athy."

"I am not yet tamed by sorrow, Uncle Robert," the young man answered, with a smile, and added, "You are not looking particularly lively."

"I am never lively," Sir Robert answered. "When a man's liver and digestion are thoroughly out of order, never expect him to be lively. I have never been in good spirits once since I was born. Now pray attend to our guests; do the honours for me."

At that moment the door opened and the two daughters of Sir Robert entered. Eva, the eldest, was dark and rather stout. She had fine black eyes, long, thick black hair, and a most vivacious countenance, but she was not handsome. Alice, the younger daughter, was decidedly plain, with scanty brown hair, a long upper lip, a clumsy nose; her face was good-tempered, but rather stupid.

In short Miss Eva Rodney was the clever one of the family, the ruling spirit of the house. She was shrewd, active, energetic, and fond of power; she was, perhaps, rather more feared than loved by the poor peasants on the estate, but her impulses were generous, her heart was kind.

Sir Robert intended to marry this strong-minded young lady to his nephew Horace, the heir to his title and estates. It seemed that during the past season the Miss Rodneys had met Celia Melrose in society, accompanied by a Lady Mayfield, her godmother. Lady Melrose was travelling at that time for her health in Switzerland, attended by her affectionate and lovely eldest daughter, thus the young Ladies Rodney had never seen Clemence until this evening.

However, they had heard much of her very marvellous loveliness, and they struck up an

acquaintance with Lord Melrose and Celia. Sir Robert was induced to give that nobleman and his family a hearty invite for Christmas, hence the present assemblage of guests at Wolvermoor.

Perhaps if Sir Robert had known how Horace had been raving about Clemence Melrose after merely seeing her likeness, he would not have been so ready to throw him in the beauty's way, for he was anxious that Eva should marry Horace; but it so happened that he had never heard a single word about the matter.

The whole party were soon seated before the elegantly arranged table, with its fruits and flowers, and wines and crystal and silver and china. There were all kinds of good things well prepared. Sir Robert was an epicure, and paid his cook two hundred a year.

"I am so sorry Lady Melrose is ill!" cried Eva. "But is Miss Melrose obliged to remain in the room; she must be starving!"

"She is not," said Lord Melrose; "her devotion to her mother is so great that she will not eat a morsel while she knows that she suffers. Lady Melrose is now after her journey completely prostrated by one of those terrible headaches to which she is subject."

"I shall go to her after dinner," said Eva Rodney, briskly. "I am reasoned something of a sick nurse in the village, and I think I have an infallible cure for headaches of that nervous kind."

"Nothing like rest and perfect quiet for these," said Doctor Finnean, helping himself to an entrée. "Your mother also, Miss Rodney, is a great invalid."

"Yes," said Eva, "mamma has to be always lying on her back, but she directs things still wonderfully well. I derive all my force and energy of character from mamma. My father has not the energy of a snail, but he has the tenacity of a leech in sticking to his opinions; he is an obstinate but kind-hearted person. I am as obstinate as he is, and I have more will. I mean to prescribe for Lady Melrose; I am sure I can cure her nervous headaches; they are all a form of neuralgia, Doctor Finnean."

"Ah, I see you will be the future squires," said Doctor Finnean, with a laugh. "You will prescribe air and exercise for my gentle patient. Lady Melrose is the most timid of women, but you, Miss Rodney, I presume, are given to country sports. I should not be a bit surprised to hear that you could skate, boat, swim, and ride to hounds."

"I can't swim," said Eva, holding out a large glass to be filled with Burgundy, "but I am one of the best horsewomen in Yorkshire. Ours is a rare sporting county. I follow the hounds almost everywhere. I have a favourite horse called the Coquette; she will take almost any leap, and she is as gentle as she is spirited. Athelstane, my cousin Gordon, is a fearless rider. Athy, there is a horse in the stables that even the grooms are afraid of. Would you be afraid to try him?"

Eva's great black eyes had strange lights in them as she fixed them on her cousin, who sat just opposite to her enjoying his partridge and bread sauce, it is true, for he was very hungry, but feeling quite angry with that "mamby-pamby woman, Lady Melrose," as he most irreverently called her in his heart for detaining his dream maiden so long in her sick chamber.

"Would you be afraid to try him, Athelstane?"

There was a thrill of pride in the girl's voice.

"She loves him," said shrewd Finnean to himself—"him, and Sir Robert intends her for the other twin brother. Well, well, the world is full of these mischances, which are after all just the very things which give the piquancy and flavour to life, and make the whole panorama of existence such an amusing theatre. I shall be glad to watch this play to its ending, only I have my fears that it may be tragical."

"I am not usually afraid of horses, Eva," said Athelstane, with a faint smile. "I have a knack with them, you know; I understand

them and they understand me; it is not that I am so courageous a hero."

She flushed crimson.

"Ah, ha," said the doctor to himself, as he drank a glass of champagne; "he sees that cousin Eva is infatuated with him, and he seeks to disenchanted her, which only makes the energetic lady with the tenacious will love him the more. Well, this play promises to be extremely amusing."

The gentleman did not sit long over their wine. Somebody said in the hearing of Athelstane that Miss Clemence Melrose had at last consented to partake of the wing of a chicken, and to drink a glass of old port wine, and that as Lady Melrose had now sunk into a quiet, refreshing sleep, and her maids were watching her, Clemence would perhaps come into the drawing-room for an hour presently. So Athelstane found his way into the drawing-room.

It was a large, magnificent apartment, all gold and ebony; the furniture was upholstered in cloth of gold on black satin ground. Mirrors gleamed and reflected back the priceless cups and vases of Sevres and Dresden that loaded the cabinets.

Lady Rodney, Athelstane's aunt by marriage, lay on one of those gleaming gold couches near the fire. She did not look like an invalid; she had a great deal of colour, sparkling black eyes, and a loud laugh. She was, notwithstanding her infirmity, a most lively lady. Soon she was chatting with Lord Melrose and Doctor Finnean, and the young people amused themselves as best they could.

Athelstane, since he could not speak to his dream maiden, thought that the next best thing he could do would be to talk to her sister; from her he would learn something of the girl who had won his heart—nay, who ruled his whole soul with despotic sway. Was he not "Under a Love Charm?"

He felt that the greatest prize earth afforded were as nothing weighed against the chance of winning her love!—her love. The mere thought of it set his heart and all his pulses throbbing; his blood tingled in his veins.

"It would be too much," he said to himself, "if ever she became indeed my wife—too much, far too much."

Long afterwards he remembered those words with a shudder on a certain dark day which Fate had destined that he was to live through. Meanwhile he was in that mad ecstasy of adoration which is the idolatry of humankind, an idolatry which many good men tell us is certain to be punished, that is to say, visited heavily on the head of the offender.

Athelstane hung over Celia Melrose almost as if he had been her lover. She, like Alice Rodney, Athelstane's cousin, was a plain young lady. As we have stated previously, the younger Miss Melrose was red-haired, high-cheekboned, and freckled; her face was fat, but her small eyes twinkled with good nature, and her teeth were beautiful. She thought Athelstane handsome, but she had made up her mind to marry nobody but an officer. She thought it a great pity Athelstane was not in the army, and she told him so before they had been chatting five minutes.

"I don't think any man a hero unless he is a soldier," said Celia, who was only eighteen, "and Clemence says the same."

"I must get, then, into the army by hook or by crook," said the infatuated Athelstane to himself. "I used to wish once to become a distinguished soldier," but he only laughed at little red-haired Celia and said that he was sorry to appear so insignificant in her eyes.

He did not mention the enchantress, but he led the conversation up to her; he encouraged the rather voluble Celia to talk of her lovely sister by leading up the conversation to such points as compelled the young lady to speak of her; her schoolroom days; her governesses; her love of riding.

"Clemence though is a far better rider than I am," said Celia, "only she is too reckless."



One would fancy sometimes she wanted to kill her horse and herself to see the leaps she makes him take. She has a horse at Melrose, that is grandpapa's seat, you know, in Worcestershire—a horse that won't be ridden by anybody else than her if he can help it. He has thrown one or two of the grooms. His name is Prince. He is black as jet; a most splendid fellow; a hunter. She was wishing that she could have him here at Wolvermoor. There is plenty of room in the stables, I should think, judging by the immense mass of buildings one sees to the left side of the avenue. Ah, here comes Clemence.

The door opened and the queen, the mistress, the tyrant of poor Athelstane's heart, walked majestically into the room.

## CHAPTER X.

### "TWINS."

Then art lovelier than the coming of the earliest flowers of spring, when the wild bee wanders humming, like a blessed fairy thing.

Clemence had been in close attendance on her mother, and even Athelstane had expected that she would have simply thrown a white lace fichu over her dark travelling dress, and so, perhaps, with a fresh rose at her breast, and no other ornament, have entered the grand drawing-room at Wolvermoor. But when he saw with what consummate skill the beautiful girl had attired herself, he owned to his heart that the words of Doctor Finnan were true—viz: that Miss Melrose was one of the most mercurious coquettes in the universe.

"So she thinks my heart worth winning and breaking, does she?" the young man said to himself. "Well, she will find I have a will of iron. If it costs me my life, I will make her my wife. I care not what comes afterwards, but I will call her wife before I die!"

Mad, reckless, fatal vow!

Clemence wore an evening dress of dark green velvet, cut low, and displaying her snowy arms and superb neck and shoulders. Round her throat was a massive gold necklet set with emeralds; on each arm was a bracelet to match. Richest and lace was the trimming round the exquisitely cut bodice, but otherwise the rich velvet robe was made perfectly plain.

"One might think that Clemence screwed in her waist," said Miss Colia, with a girlish giggle, whispering to Athelstane. "Did you ever see one so tiny. It's the fashion, you know, but she does not screw in in the least, I know that. As for me, papa says I am like a sofa cushion, and I don't care. I know I am clumsy, and only a foil to Clemmy, but I would not screw in for the world. She is splendid, isn't she?"

Rodney had hardly heard a word of this childish speech; he was lost in wonder at the dazzling vision of beauty before him. He looked at her now much as Pygmalion may have looked at the statue before Venus put a soul into it, and it became woman. Some memory of the poetical old all-gory was in his mind, for the young scholar murmured words in Greek verse as he gazed at the pagan beauty of Clemence Melrose.

Yes, it was a pagan perfection now that stood before him. She looked at him through her long lashes with a sleepy air of languor. He had risen to his feet, and had begged her to be seated, but she said:

"No, thank you," with a faint smile, and added: "I like to stand; I have been sitting so long, first travelling and afterwards with mamma."

She leaned one elbow on the marble mantelpiece as she spoke, and she looked at Athelstane just as if they two had been alone in the deep heart of some green summer wood, with the wild flowers embroidering the grass at their feet, the birds singing in the branches overhead, and they two, Athelstane and Clemence,

the youth and the maiden, living each for the other, and for the other alone.

Yes, it was a long, pensive, tender, yet maidenly look that she gave him. Her glorious dark eyes were veiled by their long lashes; her wealth of golden hair was wound in wreaths of heavy plaits about her superb head; her lips were parted in a half smile, and yet it was a pagan loveliness upon which Rodney gazed so passionately, drinking in such deep draughts of admiration as intoxicated his soul, and made him ready to die ten thousand deaths for the sake of winning one smile from his lady-love, like any passion-struck knight of the middle ages.

"How is it that you change so, my queen?" he said to himself. "You looked like a Madonna or an angel from a picture of a vision of heaven when you wore a hood round your face, and rode in the first-class carriage three hours ago, now you look like a goddess of the classic days—a Grecian nymph, whom Venus has filled with warm human life."

Athelstane was still determined not to betray his desperate infatuation to Clemence in words, but his flashing eyes and changing cheek told her all the same that Sir Robert's nephew was infatuated by her beauty.

"I am glad you managed to come down. I trust Lady Melrose will be well to-morrow, Miss Melrose."

"Do you?" she said, languidly, looking down demurely at the emerald bracelet as if there was something wrong with the clasp. "Well, I suppose," looking up at him now with a keen and scrutinising and dazzling glance which almost electrified him—"well, I suppose we are all obliged to say these polite and conventional things to each other, are we not? though each knows the other means nothing of the kind. Now in reality, I feel convinced that you would rather my mother would keep her room a few days and allow me to devote my charming self to you," with an arch raising of the eyebrows, and a glance round at her father, Sir Robert, the doctor, and the two Miss Rodneys, who were all engaged in studying some architect's model for new stables, a wondrous little edifice which stood on an inhospitable table, then she looked at her sister sitting on the couch, and next at Lady Rodney, to whom she had been introduced on entering, but to whom she had not yet said more than the commonplace words which courtesy demands.

Lady Rodney was staring almost rudely at Clemence, so much was she struck by her majestic beauty and superb insolence.

"There is nobody here who interests me so much as yourself, Mr. Rodney," said Clemence, in a low tone, and with a strange, sweet, yet half-mocking smile.

"I ought to feel flattered," said Athelstane. "I am the only young man in the room. You have no opportunity of measuring my fascinations with those of my contemporaries. When my brilliant brother returns, and if you find me infinitely more interesting than he is, then I shall feel more flattered than I do now."

"Let us sit down," said Clemence, pointing to the couch where her sister half reclined, and showing her exquisite little teeth in a half smile. "Now, Mr. Rodney, you ought to be charmed, enraptured, instead of being dissatisfied. How many young men I know would be frantic with joy at the prospect of finding themselves in a country house with me, while I acknowledged to them that I felt pleasure in their society, and took more interest in them than in other persons in the house."

"I cannot be frantic for a preference that means nothing the day after to-morrow when my brilliant brother and Lord Elvin are expected to arrive."

He was watching the beauty's face, and he saw a cloud pass over it as a cloud throws a passing shadow over the glorious loveliness of some sunlit valley on a summer morning.

"Not until the day after to-morrow," said the beauty. "Not polite of your brother, was it, to be absent at the time of our arrival?"

"Horace left a note for me," answered Athelstane, "in which he complains quite bit-

terly of Sir Robert sending him into Scotland to the Grangewood, Lord Elvin's seat, to consult the land agent about a particular breed of cattle. You must know that my mild-looking, invalid uncle is a great cattle fancier. Poor Horace is impatient enough to be introduced to you, doubt it not."

"Has he told you so?"

Clemence asked the question a little eagerly, with a peculiar flash in her dark, wondrous eyes.

"Certainly not, Miss Melrose. Men don't tell these kind of things to each other. It is ladies who are so fond of making confidants of their own sex."

"How was it?"

For the time the mastery, the mockery, the power to provoke seemed to have passed out of the beauty's hands, and Athelstane held the sceptre of rule. During the colloquy there was an absent, anxious, puzzled look in her eyes.

Athelstane, while his heart was raging for the love of this peerless girl, yet felt able just then to assume a careless indifference of manner. As for Clemence, she was so absent that she unconsciously took a white rose from her breast and began to pull it to pieces.

"Is your brother handsomer than you are?" she asked.

"All according to taste," said Athelstane. "His hair is lighter; his skin is fairer; he has gayer manners. We are twins, you know."

"Twins?"

She uttered the word in a low, hissing whisper, and she gave him a sudden look out of her eyes black as night and brilliant as diamonds, which he never forgot in his life. What did that strange, stealthy look mean?

"Yes, Miss Melrose, we are twins," he said, cheerfully, for there was now such a look of anguish on the face of Clemence, she had grown so white, that he found it necessary to attempt to restore her to her usual spirits. "But you look ill. Shall I give you wine? Shall I—"

"Air," said Clemence, with a sad little attempt at a smile. "Air, please," and she pointed towards a door which led into a fernery and conservatories. "If I can get to the air this will pass. Say nothing. Don't make a fuss." She rose as she spoke, and called out in a voice which shook: "Mr. Rodney is going to show me his ferns."

And then Athelstane offered his arm, and in a few moments he had passed through the conservatories and out upon a stone terrace, still with the small white fingers of Clemence locked tightly in his arm. The wind had gone down; the rain had ceased; the moon was shining full upon a mountain bare at the sides, but crowned with a wood of pines.

Just where the terrace jutted out there was nothing to be seen save this mountain with the moon shining on it and the clouds sailing over it; the mountain faced that wing of the house. Had it been daylight Clemence and her enraptured lover might have leaned over the railing of the terrace and looked below into the large splendid gardens of Wolvermoor House—splendid even now in mid-winter, with evergreen shrubs, arbutus, and holly trees, with smooth shaven lawns, and bosquets and parterres, which in summer were brilliant with the richest flowers.

As it was, neither youth nor maiden saw aught save the pine-crowned mountain with the moon sailing over it. It was a singularly mild night for the season; there was positively a mellow softness in the air.

"Are you better?"

It was Athelstane who asked this question softly. His voice shook with emotion; the hand which he would have given ten kingdoms to obtain rested within his own; nay, held it with a tenacious grasp.

"If you knew—if you knew the pain that is in my heart."

It was Clemence who spoke these words. Clemence, whose pale face was lifted towards the glory of the heavens. It was not a pagan's face now; it was not an angel's face—it was a

face almost made divine by an expression of womanly love and mingled sorrow.

"Pain?" echoed Athelstane; and then the lover lost his head; his proud resolve gave way; he began to pour forth wild—wildest words of passionate love. "Take my life!" he almost sobbed. Take me, and make of me what you will; your footstool, your slave. Before I saw you in the flesh I had seen you in dreams. I am not my uncle's heir, but with the hope of one day winning you for my wife in the distance I could gain a fortune larger than Wolvermoor. If you have troubles tell them to me. I would die to serve you."

He paused, conscious that he had been talking wildly and foolishly; the fingers pressed his arm more closely.

"Some day," said Clemence, speaking slowly and with difficulty, "I may put your love to the test. If I dared I would do it now; but I dare not. It is dangerous to trust a man."

"Dangerous? Do you not believe me when I swear that I would shed my heart's blood for your sake?"

"Many have said as much to me," the girl answered. "I am beautiful; I know it; my glass tells me that. But you only see my face. You do not know my soul."

She paused a moment. Athelstane, carried away by the maddening temptation of the hour, by the softness of the girl's voice, intoxicated by love and moonlight, and the witching of her encouraging manner, suddenly caught Miss Melrose to his heart and pressed his burning lips to her cheek.

The consequences of this rash act were rather humiliating for the lover. With a strength which her slender frame did not seem to warrant the young lady wrenched herself out of his arms, dealing him, at the same time, quite a violent blow with her open palm.

"How dare you! How dare you! How dare you!" she almost screamed; her voice shook with wrath. "I must go to my maid and call for hot water and plenty of soap to wash away your insulting kiss. Answer me, sir, what are you that you dare to take advantage of an unprotected girl in such a cowardly fashion? You don't call yourself a gentleman, I hope? But I have heard your mother was of plebeian origin."

Her bitter, scornful laughter stung the soul of Athelstane like a legion of scorpions. At that moment Athelstane hardly knew if he loved or hated Clemence Melrose.

"There was," he said to himself, "something fiendish in the way in which this truly merciless coquette had lured him on with looks and words, which, added to her witching beauty, had maddened him, he being already 'full forty fathoms deep in love,' so that he had really and truly forgotten what his instincts as a gentleman told him was his duty when he kissed a maiden to whom he was not betrothed without asking her leave."

Feeling that he was in the wrong did not make him any meeker or gentler, or more patient, because it almost seemed that this coquette had led him up to this mad act in the hope that he would commit some piece of insane folly, and thus she might have it in her power to trample on him and scorn him.

"Nobody would give you credit for being of gentle birth, Miss Melrose."

He folded his arms and spoke with a cold and cutting emphasis, though his voice shook. The coquette stamped her feet.

"Beg my pardon," she said, "on your knees, or I will never speak to you again."

"I am not a cur," the young man answered, and you are not an angel. I beg your pardon for kissing you, but I would not kneel to you in your present mood if you were ten times the witch you are."

She bowed her head.

"It is then understood I shall never speak to you again unless you kneel to me."

"And I will yet make you sue to me. I have sworn it, proud woman."

She answered by a peal of bitter and scornful laughter, and she passed into the conservatory. Athelstane did not attempt to follow. He re-

mained on the balcony. The mild air of that December night was soothing to his excited nerves. He saw the moon shining on the mountain. How calm and lovely she was; how far removed from him and his tumultuous passions.

"I will conquer that woman," said the young man, and he spoke between shut teeth. "She has made up her mind to wreck my life for her cruel sport, but I will conquer her; I will make her my wife if it costs me my very life."

Rash and insane vow!

The guests and Sir Robert and Lady Rodney, with their daughters, were all taking coffee when Athelstane came in. Clemence was chatting gaily with Lady Rodney. The party broke up at an early hour. Clemence took not the very slightest notice of Athelstane. He did not sleep all the night. As soon as day broke he arose, took his cold bath and dressed in hunting costume, for it was arranged that the Yarrow hounds, as the pack was called, were to put off from a farm called Owen's Bury at nine o'clock, weather permitting.

Athelstane opened his window, which commanded a wide view of the lovely park and the mountains beyond; the weather was perfect, with a south wind and drifting clouds, a warm, humid atmosphere and occasional bursts of brilliant sunshine. The young man hastened out to the stables to consult the grooms about the horses for the guests and for himself.

Poor Athelstane had no horse of his own, but Horace had two, and Bangs, the groom, asked him if he would have the grey or the roan. The grey was an elegant creature, with exquisite pasterns and a proudly arching neck. She was slender and stood high. She and Athelstane were old friends. She rejoiced, however, in the name of Spite, though it was not an appropriate title.

"I will ride Spite," said Athelstane; "but you have a horse here that nobody can manage. Show him to me."

The groom led the way into another stable.

"He is a devil, sir," said Bangs. "I don't think anybody can conquer him. He threw young Gillet, the stable boy, yesterday, and broke his arm."

"Let me see him," said Athelstane.

The man put the key in the stable door and turned it.

"Listen to him, sir," said he, "how he is snorting. It's as much as anyone's life is worth to go near him when he's in that mood."

"Cowards should then keep out of his way," said a gay and musical female voice.

Athelstane turned. There stood Miss Melrose in an exquisitely-fitting riding habit of rather bright green cloth. She wore a green velvet cap and feather; her ornaments were a massive silver chain and locket.

"She is more enchanting every time I see her," said Athelstane to himself. "How her eyes shine; what a beautiful demon she is, or is she an angel?"

"Only cowards are afraid of horses," said Miss Melrose, walking towards the stable-door and not taking the smallest notice of Athelstane.

"If nobody else will ride him to hounds to-day, I will!"

(To be Continued.)

## MEXICAN EXECUTIONS.

EXECUTIONS in Mexico are conducted with an eye to dramatic effect. Before a prisoner is executed, he is put in the "Capilla," that is, he is cloistered for about forty-eight hours with spiritual advisers, who, by a well-regulated system of relays, keep at him, urging him to implore forgiveness and to give himself up to God. In order to inspire the doomed with the liveliest sensations of fear a death-bell is kept tolling in the same apartment with him. In this way he is kept in duty of preparing for

death, until a short time before the fatal hour. He is then allowed some refreshment and again forced to resume his preparations, until blindfolded and marched forth to the place of execution, to which last point the ceaseless noise of the muffled bell and the exhortations of the padre confessor pursue him.

## CLARA LORRAINE;

—OR—

## THE LUCKY TOKEN.

### CHAPTER XX.

WHEN Mr. Wardlaw took leave of Mrs. Lorraine, his mind was in a state of excitement which it is impossible to describe. From the first he had been convinced that something was wrong in the Lorraine household, and that Clara's position therein was shrouded in some mystery.

Believing that he possessed a clue to that mystery, consideration for a dead friend's only child urged him to efforts which his habits and inclinations would otherwise have made very distasteful.

Sharp-eyed, keen in his perceptions, and wise in his judgments, it did not take him long to form a correct estimate of the persons who composed Alfred Lorraine's family circle. He detested the vanity, the duplicity of Mrs. Lorraine's character, and the shallow, selfish nature of Mabel. He quickly caught the tone of apprehension in Mr. Lorraine's voice whenever conversation turned in the direction of Clara, and he speedily discovered, too, that the orphan was the subject of bitter dispute between husband and wife.

Knowing of old the bent of Alfred Lorraine's nature, he asked himself why he should persist in keeping under his roof a girl who was obnoxious to his wife unless he had some strong reason therefore.

Why did he not spare himself the daily wrangles which must ensue from such persistence and let the orphan go? Why did he guard her so closely if it was not to prevent her from forming associations and awakening an interest in others which would be detrimental to his own plans?

With this suspicion in his mind, Mr. Wardlaw turned his mental microscope upon other incidents. Why had Mr. Lorraine seemed so startled when they suddenly met that evening at Mrs. Tullien's reception? Why did he at first appear on the point of avoiding a recognition, and then why did he assume a cordiality which evidently was not sincere?

Mr. Wardlaw remembered the Alfred Lorraine of earlier years as a man of no promise—as one whose spendthrift youth foreboded an improvident old age. Yet here he found him in middle life the possessor of boundless wealth, while the elder brother, once the almoner of the younger, was dead, dying, it was acknowledged, in extreme poverty, leaving his wife and only child penniless.

This phenomenon passed the comprehension of the upright, practical Mr. Wardlaw. People said that the bucket of fortune which held Alfred Lorraine went up, while that which held Arthur Lorraine went down, but when Mr. Wardlaw asked who stood at the kerb and managed the windlass his informants shrugged their shoulders and said:

"Who can tell all the details of these things? All we know is that Alfred Lorraine is a good fellow, one who spends his money royally, while his handsome wife keeps society from stagnation. What is it to us where his money came from? No one has ever hinted but that he got it honestly."

And so it went, until Mr. Wardlaw began to tire of useless questioning. He resolved upon more systematic measures, for the memory of his dead friend—he who once stood by him in his own time of need like a brother—haunted him,



urging him to give back the bread which years before had been cast upon the waters.

Therefore it was that Mr. Wardlaw became a frequent visitor at Mr. Lorraine's house. The urgent invitation of the lady of the mansion, seconded by her husband's seeming cordiality, could not be altogether ignored; so he felt that he went not there entirely as a spy.

Closely, yet carefully, he watched the daughter of his dead friend, and at every visit he became more favourably impressed by her beauty, her sweet temper and her graceful presence.

More than once he longed to take her away from her uncongenial surroundings, but he hesitated lest by making such a proposal he should prematurely arouse the suspicions of her uncle.

Many another man would have had recourse to matrimonial overtures as a cloak for his benevolence, but Mr. Wardlaw was made of different stuff. The place in his heart which a wife would once have filled had never been occupied by another. His heart was buried in the grave of one early lost; therefore it was only as a parent or as a near relative that he watched over Clara Lorraine and sought to secure her happiness.

He entirely discredited the damaging stories which Mrs. Lorraine lost no opportunity of pouring into his ears. Her words fell upon stony ground as far as belief was concerned, yet he listened with all the patience he could command, for with the slanders there were mixed certain grains of truth—among others, hints of her husband's unsettled state of mind, of his vague fears, of his inexplicable aversion to parting with Clara, and of his incoherent hints at a loss of property.

Mr. Wardlaw's clear vision interpreted these vagaries as instances of an accusing conscience, or rather as the torments of one who looks for the reward of evil deeds, and he treasured them up in his mind for future use, never doubting but that time would be accorded him to work his problem out as he might choose.

But Clara's disappearance put to a sudden end all thoughts of a longer delay. Indeed, before learning of her flight he had determined upon offering her another asylum, for the scene of the night before—that attic chamber with its lighted window, the lonely girl tossing her arms aloft with a despairing cry, was so painfully impressed upon his memory that at an earlier hour than custom sanctioned he had gone to seek her, and, if possible, bear her away to a better, happier home in the house of a friend.

The news of her disappearance fell upon him, as we have seen, like a thunderbolt; but while chafing with impatience to be gone, he was forced to listen to the platitudes, the insincere lamentations, the unblushing coquetries of Mrs. Lorraine, ere he could free himself from her toils and start upon a quest for the despairing orphan.

He had as little faith in Mr. Lorraine's pursuit as he had in the grief of his wife; therefore he left the house feeling that upon himself alone depended the only chance of the girl's recovery.

Not for a moment did the slanderous tale of her elopement with Langton find a lodgment in his belief; yet he wildly feared that in her despair and in her ignorance of the world she might have applied to him for counsel, being led thereby to an innocent reliance upon his friendliness. Yet he was speedily relieved of this thought by Lina's assurances, and he parted with the little girl heartily grateful to her for having lifted from his mind a black thought momentary fear.

He thought of Earnshaw. Should he go to him and claim the assistance which the night before had been so heartily promised him? Should they two quietly and sedulously prosecute a private search, and thus, if possible, save the girl from further publicity, or should they notify the police at once?

Before these questions could be decided Mr. Wardlaw was accosted by the very person towards whom his thoughts principally turned. Robert Earnshaw ran against and almost over-

turned him, as with alarm and excitement depicted upon his countenance, he was hastening to catch an omnibus.

"Ah, Mr. Wardlaw, we are well met," the young man exclaimed, when he recognised the person against whom he had been so forcibly jostled. "I was just going to your hotel. A terrible thing has happened to the Lorraines. Have you heard of it?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Wardlaw, passing his arm through that of his companion. "I was also just thinking of going to you to consult as to what had best be done about the matter."

He led his friend into a side street for a moment's quiet talk, and continued:

"How did you hear it?"

Earnshaw drew from his pocket a note. It was from Mrs. Lorraine, and with her usual command of expedients, she urged the young man to make all possible haste to her house, for "in consequence of Clara's disgraceful elopement, of which you have doubtless heard ere this, as it is spreading over town like wildfire, my dear Mabel is prostrated with nervous excitement. We actually fear for her life," the note further stated. "None of us can arouse her, so pray do you hasten hither and try what magic effect a loved voice may have in eliciting from her some token of consciousness."

"The fiend!" cried Mr. Wardlaw, vehemently, but under his breath, then adding aloud: "Pardon me, Earnshaw. If you are bound upon so urgent an errand as life or death I must not detain you another instant."

"Do you think I'm such a dolt as to be caught in this net? I even doubt what is said about Miss Clara's elopement, and was hastening to you to learn the truth."

"She has not eloped, but she has gone from her uncle's house."

"Where?"

"Nobody knows. Poor child! For anything we may know she may have been driven out of the world."

"What?" ejaculated Earnshaw, standing still, while all vestige of colour faded from his face. "Did no one stop her? Has no one started in pursuit?"

"As near as I can make out there was no one in the house who cared to stop her, unless it was a little girl who ran wildly after me as I came away and begged leave to join in the search."

"Little Lina," replied Earnshaw. "Once a wild little Arab, but now her cousin's staunch, trusted friend. Could she give you no information?"

"Nothing whatever."

"Did you see Mr. Lorraine?"

"His wife said he had gone out to search for Clara."

"I doubt it," returned Earnshaw, decidedly. "Indeed I discredit every word that woman utters, she has proved herself so utterly false. But we must not stand here idling. We must notify the police at once."

"And make the matter public?" asked Mr. Wardlaw.

"Mrs. Lorraine will do that any way. It is her policy to cast all the obloquy upon the poor girl that she can."

Mr. Wardlaw set his teeth hard, and following the lead of his young coadjutor, they went to the nearest police-station.

It was the beginning of a long, tiresome, and unsuccessful search, and of little use would it be for us to follow them from point to point, from one precinct to another, from north to south, from east to west.

Not satisfied with putting detectives and systematic search to the task, they devoted themselves to the work. At one time following a description which seemed to tally with their own and promise a glad certainty until a bitter disappointment awaited them, and instead of discovering the pale, despairing Clara, finding in her place a depraved, fallen sister in some loathsome haunt. At another, threatening, with sad, foreboding hearts, those dark streets leading to the water's edge, where many a poor mortal, driven by the same lashes of want and despair

as those which urged Clara to her fate, had swiftly fled to find beneath the black wave "a surcease from sorrow."

Night came, and still the two friends, worn with the day's efforts and wan with apprehension, were unsuccessful in their search.

They looked into each other's faces and mutely asked what next was to be done. Neither, for an instant, thought of giving up the search. Day or night was the same to them until some trace of the lost girl had been found.

"Let us go to Mr. Lorraine's house and see if they have heard anything," suggested Mr. Wardlaw.

Earnshaw reluctantly consented. At first he was tempted to decline outright and beg his friend go thither alone, for the thought of what might there be in store for him filled him with such disgust that he would avoid it if he could. But a significant glance from the elder of the gentlemen recalled the fact that they were equal sufferers, so in each other's company they turned toward that house which so short a time before had been to one at least the most attractive in all the town.

During their day's wandering they had seen the hapless little trunk of the lost girl at one of the stations, and both gentlemen hailed it with joy, thinking that a certain clue had been found, as the orphan's name was modestly painted on one end of it. But their joy was short-lived, for the intelligence that it had been sent thither by Mrs. Lorraine's express command, with orders that it should remain until the owner called or sent for it, again filled them with disappointment, and with this disappointment was mingled an added resentment against the heartless woman who could thus inflict indignities upon the inanimate belongings of her innocent victim.

John, the servile servant, announced their summons when the two gentlemen arrived at the Lorraine mansion, and, as usual, ushered them into the drawing-room. Mr. Lorraine was not at home, though his wife was within; but the servant could not tell whether she would receive company or not.

Mr. Wardlaw inquired for Miss Mabel, but in reply was told that young lady could not possibly be seen; so the cards of the two visitors were sent to Mrs. Lorraine, with the request, however, that she should send a reply to their message if she felt too indisposed to see them.

The gas in the drawing-room was partially turned down, and the apartment presented a certain solemn dreariness which impressed the two gentlemen as symbolic of the desolation which filled their hearts. They could not but give Mrs. Lorraine credit for successful counterfeiting, for assuredly the atmosphere of her home conveyed the impression of bereavement and sorrow.

It was some time before an answer came to their request, and then it was in person that the lady of the house responded to it. She entered the room with a faltering step and her countenance certainly bore traces of tears, as for a moment her visitors caught a full glimpse of it when she passed under the chandelier.

She seemed to be aware of this, for instantly she rang for the servant and commanded him to bring her a hand-screen from a distant part of the room, and with this she shaded her face and eyes as she sat opposite her guests.

"You must excuse me if I favour myself somewhat this evening," she said. "Even a faint light seems glaring to eyes which have been tried so sorely as mine have been to-day." And she pressed her handkerchief to them as she spoke.

Mr. Wardlaw was the first to make known the object of their visit.

"Our coming this evening is undoubtedly an added trial," he said; "but we must plead our sympathy as an excuse. We trust that your husband's efforts in tracing your niece have been more successful than our own."

"Alas! they have not," replied the lady, in a dejected tone. "Every effort has been unavailing. Every measure which Mr. Lorraine took has so signally failed that we have almost abandoned hope."

To Mr. Wardlaw's mind there came the recollection that during the day they had never heard of Mr. Lorraine being interested in the search at all, and this fact confirmed the theory which that gentleman had of late harboured.

"No," Mrs. Lorraine continued; "I fear our dear Clara will never again return to us, and the thought is fraught with such torture that I fear we shall none of us recover from the shock."

"Time, madame, works wonders," said Mr. Wardlaw, who felt that some response was necessary, yet feeling at a loss for a suitable rejoinder, such as would not compromise his own integrity.

"Ah, time," repeated the lady, half petulantly. "Time brings with it so many other trials."

"Indeed, we must remember that every hour has its sorrows, and its joys also, sometimes," responded Mr. Wardlaw, scarcely knowing what he said, and speaking, perhaps, more impressively than he thought.

"Ah! if I could only believe you," exclaimed Mrs. Lorraine, dropping her screen for a moment and flashing upon her visitor a look which made him start in alarm.

"Pardon me; you may have misapprehended me," he said, and wishing effectually to divert the course of the lady's thoughts, he continued: "It is indeed true that the day has brought with it a little gleam of hope, despite its greater disappointments; for instance, at one of the stations which we visited to-day we discovered Miss Clara's trunk, which at first cheered us incalculably. I still think, notwithstanding the officer's discouragements, that she will eventually secure it, in which case we shall be able to learn something of her whereabouts."

Mrs. Lorraine again raised her screen. "Alas! poor Clara!" she said, with half scornful commiseration. "She was always a child in her fondness for dress. She could not, of course, carry her baggage with her when she ran off; neither can she long withstand her native passion for fine clothing. Therefore, as you say, the surest way of finding her may be by watching her trunk. I hope you took the precaution of enjoining those in charge of it to let you know immediately if anyone appears to claim it."

"I did so most certainly, madame, yet it was somewhat of a mystery to us how the trunk got there, since, as you say, she was unable to take it away herself."

"Oh, why will you wrest from me all the details of poor Clara's wrong-doing?" sighed Mrs. Lorraine. "I would conceal her faults if I could, but how true it is that one error entails the discovery of many others." Spott never wrote a truer couplet than when he exclaimed:

Ah, what a tangled web we weave  
When first we practice to deceive!

Since you have asked me, and since I know how charitably disposed you are toward the erring Clara, I must confess that she has been in the habit of bribing my servants, and thus, last evening, she had her baggage secretly removed to a place whence she could obtain it any time without our knowledge. But I must beg you, as friends, to keep this knowledge. Neither Mr. Lorraine nor myself can reconcile it to our consciences to publish the poor deluded child's transgressions. Ah, me! it is sad, very sad, to think that such waywardness may be inherited, and that should Clara be providentially restored to us, all our future efforts to reclaim her may be fruitless."

Mrs. Lorraine's visitors were silent, for to them this bold declaration was beyond their reply. Mr. Earnshaw, who, until now, had taken no part in the conversation, at this point ventured to make certain inquiries concerning Miss Mabel's condition, expressing the hope that his note in reply to Mrs. Lorraine's communication of the morning had been duly received.

At the mention of her daughter's name the lady started, and again raised the screen with

an upward glance at the chandelier, as though the light from it still pained her. A moment or two elapsed before she replied, when she coldly said:

"Thank you; my daughter's condition is indeed alarming, deplorable, I may say, but I have confidence that ere long she may regain her senses."

With something of an effort she went on: "The poor girl was more deeply attached to her cousin than I was aware. Had I suspected the extent of the influence which Clara had acquired over her I should have been able to prevent this direful result. At present, as you may imagine, we are all in a state of the wildest excitement, I really never expected to experience such trials."

The two gentlemen arose at this hint.

"Would it be asking too much of your kindness to let us know if you receive any tidings of your niece?" said Mr. Wardlaw. "As I told you this morning, there is a communication of great moment which I should have made to her some days ago. It must be delayed no longer than Providence ordains."

Again Mr. Wardlaw caught a glimpse of Mrs. Lorraine's face, and he noted that across it at these words there flitted a spasmodic flash of hate such as he had never before beheld upon a woman's face, and which he hoped he might never see again.

Yet the promise which he asked for was given in a sweetly modulated voice, and directly thereafter, with many courteous speeches on both sides, the gentlemen took leave.

When they had gone Mrs. Lorraine dropped the mask she had held, and burying her face in her hands, moaned in unaffected anguish. Yet not with the anguish of a broken, remorseful spirit, but rather with the cry of a soul on the brink of perdition.

"Why do I so blindly rush upon my fate?" she cried. "Why does this cold, haughty, middle-aged man hold my heart as in a vice? Is it that his coldness fires me with the resolve to conquer it? Is it that my heart seeks some compensation for the love of my husband which I know I have forfeited, or has Fate decreed that my destiny shall be linked with his? Oh, miserable wife that I am! I feel that I love him, love him beyond all else, and yet he clings to the hated Clara and would wed her even, though I threw myself at his feet. Oh, that wretched, hateful Clara! It is well indeed that she has fled; for were she here, were I to meet her while this mood is upon me, I fear that a fearful crime would rest upon my soul, even a greater crime than—"

She stopped, but a moment later continued:

"No, Great, indeed, it would be, but not a greater one than that which I contemplate. And again burying her face in her hands, that same wild cry burst from her lips.

"Eugenia, what is the matter? Are you ill?"

She started up with a frightened look as though a Medusa head had suddenly been thrust before her eyes. Her husband stood before her, pale and haggard.

"Are you ill?" he repeated.

"No, I am not ill," she answered, in a hollow voice. "You have been out all day. Have you heard anything of Clara?"

"No," he returned, sullenly. "Your work I cannot undo. We must all take the consequences. Joan says that Wardlaw has been here twice to-day. Is it so?"

"Yes," his wife replied, almost in a whisper.

"What was his business?"

"He came to make inquiries about Clara."

"Then he knows she has gone?"

"Yes."

"Is he searching for her?"

"Yes."

Mr. Lorraine struck his hand against his forehead.

"Then he'll find her," he said. "He'll find her if she's above ground, and Clara was too much of a Christian to rush to suicide."

Wardlaw will find her."

He took a turn or two about the room.

"Eugenia,"

Again the wife started, for in the brief interval which had elapsed since last her husband spoke, her mind had wandered off into other channels.

"Eugenia,"

"Well?" she replied. "I am listening to you."

"We must leave town to-morrow, as soon as we can prepare ourselves."

"For what purpose?"

"It is not necessary that I should tell you. We must leave town, I say. That must suffice."

"To go where, and for how long a time?"

"To America, to stay, perhaps, for ever," was the fiercely uttered reply.

He said no more, but turning suddenly away, went to his own room, where, until day broke, his wife heard the nervous rustling of papers and the steady movement of his pen alternating with a restless pacing of the floor.

CHAPTER XXI.

UNTIL late into the night, until far into the morning, Mrs. Lorraine, from her own sleepless couch, heard the steady movement of her husband's pen, as it seemed to glide over sheet after sheet of paper—heard, too, the restless pacing up and down the floor, and over and anon a deep-drawn, anxious sigh, which at times seemed more like a groan than a sigh.

She lay wondering what the future would bring forth, wondering more than all else what her own future was to be. Like an evil enchantress who has invoked spirits whose nature she knew not, she was aghast at the possible consequences of her own work, for blinded by selfishness as she was, she felt that Clara's departure from beneath her roof was the signal for disasters which she could not foresee.

"Who and what is the girl that she should so influence Alfred Lorraine's movements?" she thought, as she lay perplexed and tormented by conflicting suggestions. "What is the meaning of this suddenly proposed journey abroad? I will not accompany him! If he goes, it shall be without me; for I will not, I cannot tear myself away from home at this juncture. My happiness is centred here, and were all the world promised me as a reward, I would not set foot on foreign soil so long as William Wardlaw remains behind."

As she lay in her luxurious chamber, hearing the wild storm which had suddenly arisen without—started occasionally from sleep by the mad gusts which shook the windows as if they were determined to break in upon her no thought of the wandering Clara entered her mind.

Not for an instant did she reflect that perhaps the orphan might be exposed to those blasts as well as to many another danger infinitely worse than the warning of wind and rain.

Securely housed, comfortably lodged, luxuriously fed, Mrs. Lorraine's thoughts had never gone out toward the suffering, neither had her hand ever been stretched forth to aid them.

She would draw her silk skirts aside in the street whenever she met a beggar, lest she should be contaminated by a chance touch, and her gaze was always averted from anything which bore the stamp of suffering.

Even her own children in their illness were nursed by hirelings, and her mother died alone, with no one to close her eyes and whisper a comforting word in her dying ear. So it is no wonder that such a woman had no thought to bestow upon the hated girl whom her persecutions had driven forth.

If her husband's strange conduct, if his inexplicable words, and still more inexplicable commands, alarmed her, she resolved she would find a way out of her difficulties, even if that road should lead to the very gates of death. Everything had prospered hitherto to her satisfaction thus far, and she would continue so to shape affairs that she would not be haunted of final triumph.

Towards morning she fell asleep, but when



she awoke it seemed as though she were living over again the events of the day before, for upon opening her eyes she saw standing beside her bed her maid Cécile, with the same look upon her face which it had worn twenty-four hours previously.

"What is it, Cécile?" said Mrs. Lorraine, starting slightly as if with some premonition of evil. "Has Clara returned during the night?"

"No, madame, she has not returned," replied the maid.

"Then why are you here disturbing me again as you did yesterday?"

"Because, madame, I have some other bad news to tell."

"Bad news!" repeated Mrs. Lorraine. "Did you call Clara's flight bad news, you stupid girl?"

"Pardon, madame, but the news I bring to-day is ver' much worse than that about Mees Clara."

"Then tell it quickly, Cécile. I am not fond of mysteries."

In response the girl drew a letter from beneath her apron and offered it to her mistress.

"Who is it from?" the latter demanded.

"From Mees Mabel."

"From Miss Mabel, indeed. She must have suddenly grown very fond of letter-writing if she prefers sending notes to coming to my chamber. What does she want, Cécile?"

"Had not madame better read the letter and see? I should not read the billet which is not write to me."

Mrs. Lorraine took the note impatiently and tore off its envelope. She glanced her eye carelessly over its contents, but an instant later a wild cry burst from her lips.

"Cécile!" she screamed, "this is your doing!"

And springing from the bed she seized the girl by the shoulders and shook her until her very teeth chattered.

"Cécile," she repeated, "this is your doing. You have betrayed me. You have betrayed me!"

"I, madame?" gasped the girl, shaking with fear, for though she might cope with the anger of the weak Mabel, she stood terrified before the wrath of Mrs. Lorraine. "I, madame? Pray tell me what I have done. Indeed, madame," and the girl began to cry, "I know not why I should be pinched and shook. I have served madame, and I know not what she mean when she say I have betray her."

Mrs. Lorraine stamped her foot with passionate violence.

"Cécile," she almost shrieked, "don't dare repeat your falsehoods to me. Go to your own room, gather up your things, and leave my house before noon. I will no longer suffer such a viper to remain under my roof."

"Pray, madame, do not be so cruel to Cécile. What have Mees Mabel done? What have she say about me to make madame so angry? I watch her room close all day yesterday, as madame commanded."

"Tis false, Cécile. You did not guard her room as I bade you."

"Yes, madame, I did—I surely did," asserted the girl. "All day long I sit in the hall beside the door to watch if she go in or come out, and she not do either; so I call and I say, 'Mees Mabel, will you have something to eat?' and she say nothing, and I think she be sleepy, or what you call sulky, and I say no more then; but after a little I say again, 'Mees Mabel, won't you have something to eat?' and again she say nothing. So what shall I do? I try to go into her chamber to see if she is dead, or alive or sulky; and I cannot, for the door is locked. Then I try for to look if I can see in through the hole of the key, and I cannot, for it is all dark there, and then I say, 'Well, if Mees Mabel weesh to be sulky I cannot help dat, and I say no more.' Will you have something to eat, but I keep still and go on with my work, and once in a while I sing. What else could I do, madame?"

"Heads, you know very well that all the while you were watching an empty room—that before

you took up your position Mabel had escaped. You try in this way to blind me and keep a situation which you have forfeited by your perfidy."

"Oh!" cried the maid, wringing her hands. "What ver' terrible things madame can say! I did not leave the chamber—no, not an instant except when I go to the hotel of Monsieur Langton, as madame have command me to do."

"Hush, Cécile!" exclaimed Mrs. Lorraine. "Not so loud. You know you are not to mention that."

"But, madame, how can I help mentioning that when I am so unjustly accused? If Mees Mabel get out of her chamber it was when I was gone to the hotel of Monsieur Langton."

"Silence, Cécile!" again exclaimed Mrs. Lorraine, stamping her foot, as she proceeded with her hasty toilet. "All you might utter between this and midday would make no difference in my belief. You have been guilty of deception, and I will have you no longer in my service."

Mrs. Lorraine's voice shook with agitation, for really the note which she had received contained tidings which would have filled any mother's heart with dismay—even the heart of so indifferent a parent as Mrs. Lorraine. She motioned the girl from the room. Then, having finished dressing, she took the letter, and with a trembling hand, knocked at the door of the adjoining room.

She was commanded to enter, and a moment later she crossed the threshold of her husband's private study, where, when sleepless or pressed by anxieties, he was accustomed to pass many hours of the night, and where, during the one just passed, he had spent them all.

More haggard and anxious than on the previous evening, he looked up with a frown as his wife appeared.

"Could you not have spared me this interruption, Eugénia?" he said. "I am exceedingly busy and do not like to be disturbed."

"The interruption is necessary, Alfred," she said, in an unnatural voice, seating herself opposite him.

Mrs. Lorraine laid down his pen, for, preoccupied as he was, he could not but see that something had greatly shaken his wife's equanimity.

"What paper is that which you have in your hand?" he asked, pointing to the note which she held.

"It is a letter," she mechanically replied. "Yesterday morning at this hour you read one to me. It is now my turn to read one to you. I would spare myself the pain of doing so were it possible, for I assure you the reading of it is the most humiliating task I have ever assigned myself."

"Then pray defer it until another occasion," said Mr. Lorraine, irritably. "I tell you again, Eugénia, I am very busy, and would rather not be disturbed just at present."

Mrs. Lorraine's eyes flashed as she replied:

"You do not know what you say, Alfred. Whatever your business may be, it should and must wait until I have acquainted you with the contents of this note."

She braced herself back in her chair and commenced reading, though it was with a contemptuous curl of the lip that she pronounced the opening words:

"MY DEAR MAMMA:

"I know this letter will offend you, but I can't help it. I didn't believe Cécile when she said that Clara and Charlie Langton had eloped—at least, if I believed it at first, I did not awhile later, after I had thought of it all, for Clara has no money, not even a penny, while I have plenty; and money is what Charlie must have. So after Cécile went to your room I dressed myself for walking, and slipped away, and went to Charlie's hotel and had a full explanation with him. He says that he never meant to marry Clara; that he only flirted with her a little to tease me, and that if you go on accusing him in such a damaging way he'll be obliged to bring an action for slander. I tell you this not to frighten you, but only as a joke, for, of

course, Charlie isn't in earnest. Well, dear mamma, the upshot of it all is, that Charlie and I are married. Probably before Cécile got through telling you all that stuff she told me we were pronounced man and wife by a nice little Methodist minister, whose name I'll enclose to you to satisfy you it's all right.

"We left town directly, and have come to this little place to stay until you and papa become reconciled to the thing. All the way here Charlie and I couldn't help laughing when we thought of Cécile's watching before my locked door, for Charlie said of course you would try to keep me a prisoner until Clara's affair was well through with. Tell Cécile she may have my old grey silk to console her; and tell papa and Lina (the little tiger!) that I shall not forget them if I am married. As for you, dear mamma, I suppose you'll be awfully vexed. I haven't forgotten how you threatened me once, but I'm not afraid now, for my husband will protect me. I wish you'd please send me my things. The three trunks in my wardrobe will hold everything I shall need at present; and won't you ask papa to send me five or six hundred pounds, for I left in too much of a hurry to ask him myself? Your affectionate daughter,

"MABEL LORRAINE LANGTON."

(To be Continued.)

## A MATRIMONIAL PRIZE.

CHICAGO contains one woman that is a prize. Her name is Mrs. Christine Olenson, and she lives with her husband in a modest tenement. What is specially remarkable about the lady is the fact that she has made nearly all the furniture in the house with her own hands! A reporter recently visited her, and thus describes what he saw:

"Mrs. Olenson has completely furnished the house, and it is most magnificently done, too. The husband first escorted the scribe to the little parlour, where nearly everything in the shape of furniture is from the hands of his helpmate. Standing opposite the door is a very handsome organ, the case of which is finely finished in a variety of hard woods. Upon the case is a very life-like bird in the act of seizing a cherry in its bill. On a front panel is an East Indian, full-rigged ship, under full sail. The water, which is most excellently represented, is of a piece of dark wood whose grain is wavy, and which is neatly joined to produce the desired effect. A secretaire occupies the other side of the room, and is constructed of 3,000 pieces of wood. The design is unique, and the manner in which a number of secret drawers are stored away is something marvellous. The centre table is also of her construction, and is very handsome. The cornices, picture frames, stools and chairs are all from the deft fingers of Mrs. Olenson."

"A magnificently carved bedstead graces their sleeping apartment, and other articles of minor importance are scattered about the rooms. Mrs. Olenson has manufactured nearly all her wooden tools, and the greater part of her steel ones. She is thirty-six years of age, tall and straight, fair, pleasant, and determined."

Two Californian ladies have signed an agreement to fight with gloves for a purse of 250 dollars, the prize to be awarded to the fair one who displays most science and endurance. One of the combatants is described as a blonde, with regular features, small, white, and well-formed hands, and a mild and quiet manner. The other is a brunette, with black eyes and hair, long arms, a vicious temper, and a style of conversation described as "snappy and energetic." The finger nails of these interesting creatures will be pared, before the battle, as there is just a chance of the gloves being slipped off and the ten commandments coming into play.



[COUSINS.]

## TRUE IN DEATH.

ROBERT SPENCER sat alone upon the stone steps by the fountain in his own pretty grounds, reading a letter. His handsome face was darkened by a frown, and his dark eyes glittered dangerously. A few moments ago he sat down there, feeling perfectly happy; but now he was as miserable as man can be.

For two weeks his fiancée, Mary Stanley, had been at his sister's on a visit, and the time had flown rapidly to two persons, at least. On the afternoon of the opening of our story, she and Mattie Spencer had gone to town to do some shopping; and as they had declined Robert's offer of assistance, he was forced to remain at home alone. For some time he sat in the house and read; but, growing tired of that, he took his book and went out of doors. A boy came up the path, and Robert saw him and inquired his business.

"I want Miss Stanley," the boy answered. "I've got a note for her."

"A note? Let me have it. She is out, and I will give it to her."

"Well," said the boy, "he told me not to give it to anybody but her; but I can't wait, so here it is."

Robert took the note and looked at it very closely. It was directed, in a bold dashing hand, to Miss Mara Stanley. The writing was unmistakably a gentleman's. Robert turned it

over, looked at every side of it, and at last forgot himself so far as to open it. As he read the few lines he bit his lips with anger, and a dull pain at his heart told him how dear the lovely Mara was to him. The note was signed "Willie," and the writer asked Mara to meet him at the "usual place" at half-past eight that evening. Robert fairly groaned. Would she go? That was the question. But he would not wait for time to decide; he would not wait and give his rival a chance to utter words of love to her whom he had loved so long; he would upbraid her with her perfidy as soon as he saw her.

He was all impatience, and started off to meet the carriage, which he knew must be near home by this time. After he had walked rapidly for about half an hour, he saw them coming. As Mara caught sight of him she smiled a glad, happy smile; but as she came nearer, and saw how haggard he looked, she feared that he was ill, and anxiously inquired the cause of his wan, weary look. He knew that if he was stern she would haughtily resent his manner; so he said, calmly:

"No, Mara, I am not ill, neither do I feel well or happy. Will you walk to the house with me?"

"To be sure I will!" she said, cheerily alighting as she spoke.

The carriage passed on out of sight. Mara put her hands on her lover's arm, and looking tenderly up into his face, said:

"Now, Robert, confess: are you ill, cross,

worried, or what? Tell Mara, and let her comfort you."

He shook her hands from his arm, and answered, coldly, as he put the note in her hand:

"You will preface your words of love with an explanation of this, if you please."

She took the open note and read it. At first a look of utter bewilderment passed over her face as she saw his stern, angry look.

"Dear Willie," she murmured, as she read the letter again. "But Rob, what shall I explain?"

"Explain that note!" he fairly thundered. "Who is Willie?" And what right has he to write to you? I'm not a fool to be thus tampered with!"

When he began to speak she looked bewildered and distressed; but, as the true import of his words dawned upon her, she drew her head up haughtily, and every spark of tenderness fled from her beautiful eyes.

"Mr. Spencer," she said, "I question your right to open and read my letters, and I surely shall explain nothing."

He was fairly livid with rage as he answered: "You question my right, Mara? You are my betrothed wife. Have I no rights, no privileges?"

"Certainly, Mr. Spencer, you have your rights. But even if you were my husband I should object to your opening my letters. If I marry, I shall marry a husband, not a master. True love knows no distrust. We have both been mistaken, and 'tis well that we have been undeceived in time. Allow me to bid you good-evening and good-bye, for of course I cannot remain your sister's guest after what has occurred. I will say good-bye to-night, as I shall leave early in the morning. Take my advice; give up the idea of marrying, and adopt a child. If you only get one young enough you can break her spirit and bend her will to yours. Of course it will take time; but you will feel amply repaid for your trouble, it will be such a pleasure for you to feel that you are master!"

With a sweeping courtesy and a sarcastic smile she left him. He looked after her in wondering surprise; but, as he realised that she had gone, as he looked down at the glittering ring in his hand, a look of agony swept over his face, and tears sprang to the strong man's eyes.

"Mara!" he called, "Mara, come back!"

But she honoured him only with a haughty inclination of her stately head, and passed into the house.

Going directly to her own room, she sent a servant to ask Hattie to come to her. For long years they had been friends, and when Mara became Robert's betrothed, none rejoiced as much as Hattie. But now, as she entered Mara's room, she inquired, anxiously:

"What do you want, Mara? What is the matter? Surely you and Robert have not quarrelled? He came in a moment ago, looking as pale as death."

"Yes, Hattie, all is over between us. I must tell you all, and I know that you will exonerate me from blame, and tell me that I have done perfectly right. You know that Wilhelmina Rodney married Leonard Perry. You also know that he offered himself to me, and I refused him. He is very cruel to poor Willie, and denies her everything that can contribute to her pleasure. He will not let her speak to me, and so we have to see each other secretly. Poor Willie! She wrote, asking me to meet her at her mother's this evening. The boy came with the note just before we came home, and Robert opened and read it. Then he ordered me to explain the contents. He almost swore at me! I declined to acknowledge a master, and gave him back his ring. Did I do right, Hattie?"

"Well, Mara, I do not like to say. It was certainly wrong for Robert to open your letter, but I do not wonder at his being angry. Was the note signed Willie? She always used to sign herself so."

"Yes, of course it was; but he had no right to insult me by distrust. My love has been too



true, too pure to allow that. I gave him the first true love of a pure heart; and he ought to trust fully and completely. Do not try to effect a reconciliation between us, Hattie, for I will never, never forgive him!"

Hattie Spencer knew her friend too well to think that argument would do any good, so she kissed her and left her with a sad heart. She went straight to her brother.

"Rob, you have been an idiot!" were her emphatic words. "Don't you remember Mara's old room-mate at school, Willie Rodney? That note was from her. But it will do you no good to try and make up your quarrel, for Mara will never forgive you."

"She need not, Hattie. She never loved me, or she would not be so ready to give me up."

"Never loved you! Rob, you know nothing of love when you say that. I never saw a woman love as she does. She is too good, too pure, to love at all and not love with all her heart. But you have recklessly cast your treasure away, and I hope you will realise just how foolish you have been."

True to her word, Mara left for home the next morning. She gave Robert her hand and wished him "Good morning" in the coolest possible manner. He tried to be as cool and collected as she, but his attempt was a miserable failure. When she had gone, he sat down, utterly miserable. He saw how sinfully foolish he had been to distrust the woman whom he professed to love, and who loved him. Distrust and jealousy are insults to any true woman. Perfect love and perfect faith are utterly inseparable.

After a few weeks Robert wrote to Mara, and asked her to forgive him and give back her love. He pleaded his great love for her as an excuse for his jealousy and distrust. She answered:

"Yes, Rob, I know that you love me after a certain way. I thought that I loved you, and so I did when I promised to be your wife. I loved you, respected you and trusted you with the entire power of my soul. I would have staked my life on your nobleness. But when you lowered yourself to petty jealousy, when you doubted my love, yes, my very truthfulness, for had I not promised, with my hand in yours, to love no one else but you, to be yours till death?—when you showed me so plainly that you doubted me my respect fled, and with it my love. I do not pretend that I have given up all the old love, for that is impossible; I have loved too long and too well. But I do not love you as I did once. I should not dare to trust myself or you. Do not plead with me, for you cannot alter my determination. I shall never marry unless I find the one person in all the world who I know can make me happy. Now do not cherish the idea that it can ever be otherwise. I hope that you will forget me, and find someone else whom you will trust as you do not trust me."

Months passed wearily to him who had so recklessly cast from him the best of all earthly treasures, a true, faithful love. But he saw no way to regain it, and so he had to try to be content.

"Mara, I tell you it is the only way. If you do not marry Colonel Brandon I am a ruined man. I have kept the secret from the world as long as I can. If you become his wife before he sails for America, as he wishes, all will yet be well; but otherwise—"

"Father," answered Mara, "I would do anything but this. But I cannot marry a man whom I do not love. I cordially respect Colonel Brandon, but I do not love him. Take my fortune; I will work, beg, steal, before I will perjure my soul by false marriage vows—before I will so wrong myself and the man who honours me enough to offer to make me his wife, by giving an empty hand and unloving heart."

Her father urged, but to no purpose.

"Colonel Brandon," she answered, "I respect and admire you, and I thank you with all my

heart for the honour you do me; but I cannot be your wife."

Colonel Brandon was a good, noble man, and he truly loved Mara; and though his handsome eyes were full of sorrow as he heard her words, he answered calmly, though tenderly:

"Mara, for years my one dream has been to make you my wife; but if I must resign the one dearest idea of my life, I will not cloud our parting by unavailing regrets. But, let me ask, do you love anyone else?"

"Yes, Colonel Brandon, I will be perfectly honest with you. I know that you will respect my confidence. Five years ago I became Robert Spencer's promised wife. I loved him, and should have been his wife long ere this, but he distrusted me, and I broke my engagement."

"Rob Spencer! Why, Mara, I never heard of that. Rob is a noble fellow. But rest assured that I shall respect your confidence."

Mara had found out, as many do, too late, that it is far easier to bid love die than kill it. But what could she do? She had determined to root up her love for Robert, but the task was indeed a difficult one. If memory had not constantly been bringing his every word and tone to her she would have been truly thankful; but who of us is ever free from the haunting dreams of the past?

How often, when we are congratulating ourselves that we have deeply buried and utterly forgotten some deep sorrow or joy, or perhaps some deep blended sorrow and joy, does some trifling act or careless word open anew the grave, and bring forth the would-be-forgotten past! How often, when we are living in the present, and thinking ourselves happy in it, do we find ourselves carried, completely against our will, back, back to the happy or perhaps the miserable past!

But why fight against the inevitable? No grave is deep enough or dark enough to hold the memories which will, in spite of all effort, come unbidden and unwelcome to the mind.

Mara could not forget. She had forgiven long, long ago, but forget she could not. She could not humble her pride by writing to him; and so she lived on, with a longing for the sound of his voice, for the clasp of his hand, which she could not stifle.

"Rob, look here, please," said Hattie Spencer, one bright morning, as her brother entered the breakfast room. "See, is this not glorious? Aunt Deborah has written to ask me to spend the summer with her. She says that Virgie is to be married early in October, and that I must be one of the bridesmaids. She asks me to come by the first of June. Oh! will it not be lovely?"

"Why yes, Hattie, it will be pleasant. Who will be there?"

"Well," said Hattie, consulting her letter, "she says that Maud and Freddie Terry are to come some time in July, and that Sue Adams and her younger sister Maria are there now. Colonel Brandon is there, and you are to come any time before the middle of June."

"Well, get your fine feathers all plumed, and I will join you at the appointed time. So Virginia is to be married at last? Well, she will grace the Orman mansion, but I am afraid she will not bless her husband's heart. Olcott Orman is a grand fellow, and I wish that he had chosen a woman with a heart."

"Why, Rob, I think that Virgie loves Olcott. She seems to be devoted to him."

"Seems, indeed! Why, Hattie, she is a perfect coquette, and cannot help flirting. I suppose she thinks that she loves him. She would make anyone believe that she loved devotedly. I have seen her look into poor Jack Howell's eyes as if she were dying for love of him. I tell you, such women cannot help it. I have seen him tremble and grow pale at that tender, lingering touch of her hand which only a woman knows how to give. Hattie, Jack Howell was my dearest friend, and I know that Virgie Havens killed him. I watched that flirtation, and I never think of that lonely grave in Greenwood without anathematizing woman's folly. Don't tell me! I know!

I saw with my own eyes and heard with my own ears. I have never told anyone before, nor would I tell you if poor Jack was not dead. That time when I was sick at Aunt Deborah's I crawled down into the parlour, one evening, and lay down on the sofa. After a time Jack came in and sat down before the grate. I was too tired to talk, so I kept still, and after a time, I fell asleep. I was aroused by the fall of a window up above somewhere, and when I opened my eyes I saw that Virgie had entered the room and was standing by Jack's chair. Heavens! it makes my blood boil to think of it. Her hands were passed so tenderly, so caressingly, over his hair; her cheek lay close against his, and her warm breath was on his lips. She lay in his arms, and let him look into her eyes and read love as plainly written there as it ever was in woman's eyes. I heard him ask her in a voice husky with love and doubt to be his wife, and then she answered him. How? She put her hands up to his lips and bade him stop, if he did not wish to kill her. Kill her! Bosh! Women's hearts are made of granite. She told him that she was so grieved, and that she had been so happy in his friendship. She actually offered her lips for a kiss, and begged him to be her friend! Her friend! Great heavens! I'd have killed her if I had hung for it! Poor, poor Jack! He's better off. I'd rather be in my grave than married to such a woman."

"You are severe, Rob. She is a coquette, but all women are not."

"I'm not sure of that, little sister. A woman accepts all the love that she can get, and when she has done with it throws it aside as carelessly as she would a cast-off glove. It is becoming an acknowledged fact that it is so, and both men and women understand it perfectly. Years ago, if a man told a woman that he loved her it was as good as an offer of marriage; but no one dreams of such a thing now. But we'll go and help Virgie cut a dash on her wedding-day. I hope, as she puts her hand in Olcott's and promises to love, honour and obey, that she will see Jack Howell's grave before her eyes. If they say anything to me about going with them on their wedding trip, I shall suggest a visit to Greenwood."

"Oh, Rob, you would not be so mean!"

"Wouldn't I? Trust me! But never mind, Hattie; do not look so sorry; you're not a flirt."

So, kissing his sister, Rob took up his hat and left the room.

Hattie's preparations went forward rapidly, and the second day of June found her at her aunt's.

"Now, auntie, let me go to my room and dress, for I am dying to hear the news. I'll hurry and get down in time for a nice long chat before dinner."

Soon she came down looking very sweet and pretty in her pure white dress and blue ribbons.

"Now, Aunt Deborah," she exclaimed seating herself by her aunt's side, "do tell me who is here. Colonel Brandon?"

"Yes; Colonel and Lieutenant Ramsey arrived yesterday. The house is full, and we are daily expecting more. When will Rob come?"

"He said that he would try and come next week; but I am afraid he cannot get all his business arranged by that time. How does Virgie bear it? Does she feel sorry about leaving home?"

"Yes, I think she does. She has been very low-spirited for some weeks, and I have feared that she was not well; but I guess it is only the thought of leaving home for so long a time. Olcott sent her an elegant set of pearls yesterday, and she only glanced at them. A few minutes after I found her in her room crying as if her heart would break. I am provoked at her. It is not like her to act so. I gave her credit for more spirit."

"Aunt Deborah, do you think she loves Olcott Orman?"

"Loves him? Oh, Hattie, do not, I beg of you, try me by any of your sentimental notions.

Loves him? Of course she loves him well enough. This idea of love is all nonsense. He is rich, handsome, and of a good old family. What more could she desire?

"Certainly nothing, auntie; if she is contented, I am; but, for my part, I had rather feel my husband's arms around me, knowing that I was his dearest earth possession and he mine, than to have a crown of jewels blazing upon my brow and no love throbbing in my heart."

"You are too old-fashioned, altogether, Hattie."

"Perhaps I am. Love may be very much out of style, but it is just as sweet a treasure as it ever was."

Just then Virginia entered the room.

"What's that, Hattie? You and mamma discussing love? Oh, fie! take a less hackneyed subject. Going, mamma! Please send Fanchette to me. I want my shawl; I am really quite cool. Now, Cousin Hattie, how are you? So you believe in marrying for love. Believe me, my pretty cousin, it would not pay. Excuse the slang; but love pays a very small percentage."

Hattie looked indignant as she answered, "Virgie, were you ever in love? I do not mean the foolish, school-girl acceptance of the term, but really and truly."

Virginia Haven's beautiful face darkened ominously at the question; then she suddenly bent forward and took her cousin's hand.

"Hattie, you have not the faintest conception of what love is. Yes, I once truly loved, and Heaven help me! I—oh, Hattie, pity me! But stop—I am wild. I did not dream that I was so weak."

"Oh, Virgie, tell me? Did you love Jack Howel?"

Hattie Spencer's eyes fairly blazed as she asked the question, and listened, with bated breath, for the answer.

"Did I love Jack Howel? Yes, I loved him so well that I would willingly have died for him. But I could not live for him. I loved him so well that I gave him up; and, Hattie, a woman can give no stronger proof of her love than to give up the love which she longs for with every breath of her life. I had been brought up to a life of idle, useless luxury, and I could not burden Jack with such an unworthy helpmeet. I hated the wealth which my ancestors were so proud of. I hated my accomplishments. Oh, if I had only been some farmer's or mechanic's daughter! Then I could have put my hand in Jack's and been a proud, happy wife. If there is anything on earth which a woman ought to glory in, it is the love of a good man. My wedding day is approaching; but if I could know that it would find me in Greenwood, by Jack's side, instead of at the altar, I should be far happier. A great many blame me, and say that I flirted with my poor darling. I did not; I knew that he loved me, and, loving him as I did, was it wrong to let him know it? No—there has been enough of misery in my life. Did it follow that because I loved him and told him so, that I must become his wife? They say he died for love. Perhaps he did; but my fate is a thousand times worse, for I must live. I must carry my love with me, an ever-present death. But now, little cousin, promise me, with a kiss, never to mention this, for in a few short weeks I shall be Olcott Orman's wife."

One evening the elegant drawing-rooms of the Havens were alive with beauty and fashion. The music was exquisite, and as light forms moved through the graceful dance, it would have been difficult for anyone to imagine such a thing as a heavy heart in all that gay crowd. Rob Spencer had not arrived, but was expected that evening by the early train.

In the midst of all the gaiety a carriage drove up, and she alighted to be met by his aunt, who hurried him off to his room to dress. He soon made his appearance, and was warmly welcomed by his host of friends. As he shook hands with his cousin, Virginia, she chided him jestingly for not coming sooner.

"Why, Rob," she exclaimed, "tis two years since you have paid us a visit? Now do you not feel just a little ashamed of yourself?"

He bent low in mock respect before her, and answered so that she alone heard.

"No, Virgie, I am not ashamed of staying away. It has been very hard for me to forget that lonely grave of poor Jack's. I have found it hard to forgive the woman who robbed me of the one I loved so well. I have forgiven at last, but I hope that on her wedding day she will find it as hard to forget as I do."

Virginia listened to him with eyes dilated with anguish, and when he had finished she put her hand upon his arm and tried to speak. But the lips refused to move, and with a cry of pain she sank apparently lifeless in his arms.

In a moment all was confusion. She was carried to her room, and the physician summoned. The guests, not feeling disposed for any more merriment, lingered for a time to discuss the strange circumstance, and then dispersed to their different rooms. Hattie lingered to speak to Rob, and in spite of her promise, she told him what Virgie had told her about her love for Jack Howel. He could hardly credit it, but his cousin's behaviour seemed to verify the truthfulness of the statement. At last he exclaimed:

"What idiots men and women are! Virgie might have known that Jack would have gloried in working for her. Hattie, I am going to see Mara to-morrow. Colonel Brandon told me that he proposed to her and that she refused him. I will not allow my darling to slip from me without an effort to prevent it."

In the solemn hush of an early dawn Hattie and Robert Spencer were awakened, and told to dress quickly and come to Virginia's room.

"She is dying, Hattie," said the grief-stricken mother; "come quickly."

They entered the room and knelt by the bed. Very beautiful indeed looked Virginia Havens, as she lay back against the linen, not whiter than her own white face. "Mother," she said, "take my ring from my finger. Give it to Olcott, and tell him that Heaven will not let me wrong him by becoming his wife when I do not love him. In the ebony box on my dressing-bureau you will find another ring. Put it on my finger. Rob, it was poor Jack's. Hattie, may Heaven save you from becoming as false and heartless as I have been. It has been my heart for years that I had no heart. Rob, my dear cousin, do not blame yourself for an instant for what you said to-night; you did perfectly right. And now I, who have always scoffed at the shadow of its very existence, am dying for love! My darling, Virgie was not all false! She is coming to you now."

In the darkened room, Robert Spencer knelt by the caser which held the remains of his beautiful cousin. Upon her hand glistened Jack Howel's ring, and upon that peaceful bosom rested his picture. The lovely hands held snow-white flowers, and the beautiful girl was at rest.

As Robert knelt there he felt a light touch upon his shoulder, and looking up, he saw Mara Stanley. Without a word he drew her to his side, and they both bent and kissed the calm, cold lips of the sleeper.

"Mara, my darling, my wife, let us live for each other, let us be true in life. For poor Virgie, death is sweet; but death does not always come when desired, and what would life be to me without my darling?"

Rob, here by Virgie's side, with her terrible death of remorse and agony fresh before my eyes, I promise you to never doubt your love for me. I love you, and, loving, trust you. Our lives are before us. Let us beat in mind that love cannot walk apart from perfect faith and confidence."

SIR GABRIEL WOLSELEY looks forward to being back in England by the end of the year.

## FACETIE.

### "ONE TOUCH OF NATURE."

(George has promised his Ethel the first shot, for luck! A covey rises!)

ETHEL, (at the critical moment): "Oh, George! perhaps they too have loved?"

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admire you for it, though I wish, for a change, you would, ere we part for ever, tell me just one little falsehood!

"You're a gentleman," said she, and left me.

From that moment we have never met, and I am still hunting around to discover an eligible site for a pauper's grave. —Fun.

"ONE TOUCH OF," ETC.

FIRST VISITOR: "Ah, how have you been all this time?"

SECOND VISITOR: "Well, not quite so well lately. I fancy somehow I've got a touch of the gout."

F. V. (speaking feelingly): "Fancy, my boy, H'm! If you had a touch of the gout, you wouldn't fancy, you'd know." —Fun.

"OUT OF SIGHT AND OUT OF MIND."

DISTRACTED MOTHER: "If you children make such a noise, I shall go out of my mind."

YOUNG RIP: "Go on, mother, I'll mind the young 'un's while you're gone." —Fun.

POOR DEAR!

A STRANGER and agonised grimace  
Convulsed the dimples in her face.

As paused my darling o'er her plate of  
veal;

Noting inquiry in my glance,  
She stammered in her utterance:

"I've bit a bitter bit o' lemon peel." —Fun.

A SAD CASE.

FARMER GILES: "Be it trow what I hear, sir, about the squire a-sending you to college, sir?"

YOUNG SQUIRE: "Yes, Giles, I'm going to Oxford to read hard."

F. G.: "Dear, dear, sir! Just as you was humpin' in your shooting and getting on so well with your riding; I call it reg'lar spinn' a good education." —Fun.

WEDDING ON THE SHORE.

CHILD: "Is this sort of weed any use, Mr. Piper?"

"Mr. P.: 'Not to me, my dear; it has to be a werry different sort o' weed to be o' use to me.'"

ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

ENGLISHMAN: "Donald, I think you are a connoisseur."

DONALD: "I'm naething 'o the kind. I'm a Scotchman, but no frae Glasgie." —Judy.

TRUE TO YOU.

"EVERY cookery-book," said Jones oracularly, "ought to be illustrated."

"Precisely," said Smith. "Quite agree with you there; for, don't you know, what is the good of a dinner without plates?" —Judy.

ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE "BRIDGE."

MASTER: "What is the first step in this problem?"

PUPIL: "Join A B."

MASTER: "What next?"

PUPIL: "Rub it out again."

Tableau, during which the cane is flourished. —Judy.

THE WET SEASON.

OLD GENTLEMAN (on his way to bed, after several tumbler, tapping the clock-case): "Glass uncommonly high, c'shid'rin' quant'y 'f wet we've had (hic)!" —Punch.

## STATISTICS.

EUROPEAN POSTAL STATISTICS.—Altogether there were, on December 31, 1877, 58,460 post offices with 223,517 persons employed; there being, therefore, on an average one postal establishment for every 6,134 inhabitants throughout Europe. These post-offices are thickly planted in Switzerland, and after Switzerland

in Great Britain and Ireland. A striking contrast to these two countries is afforded by Russia and Turkey, there being in the former only one post-office to every 5,768, and in the latter one to every 1,105 square miles. With regard also to the proportion of the number of post-offices to inhabitants, Switzerland is the country best off, there being one such establishment to every 933 inhabitants, while in Norway and Sweden there is only one post-office to every 2,224 inhabitants.

## CASTLE AND COTTAGE.

My lady who dwells in yon house of state

Is seldom at ease, I deem,

While she of the cottage beside its gate

Hath days like a summer dream;

Yet both were taken to wife one day

From roofs with the poor allied;

And each hath moulded her own life's way

Through motives of love or pride.

For the castle-dame her troth betrayed

For the bauble of wealth and state,

But to find the hope of her life gainsaid

By her treason to love—too late;

And she queens it now, but unlamented by all.

While her brainless lord, apart,

Makes spendthrift riot in park and hall

In revenge for a bartered heart.

But the cottage-wife kept plighted vow

To the humble heart, but true,

That had naught to give but the love which

now

Makes her happy the whole year

through;

They toil and love, and their lives are

sweet,

They have children blithe and fair,

And the sward is green and the garden

neat

By their little homestead there.

And, though friends they were in the days

gone by,

The good wife may not now

Her thoughts exchange with the lady high

Of the smooth and haughty brow;

Though oft the latter doth pine alone

For the joys that her friend befall,

While never an envious glance is thrown

From cottage to castle-hall.

As we sow we reap; Love's downy nest

Can never be bought and sold;

And the proudest palace, with love un-

blest,

Is barren and sad and cold.

But the humblest cot, which its glory

gilds;

May the power of bliss become,

When the blending of hearts in its good

time builds

The fireside shrine of Home.

N. D. C.

## HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

SALADY.—Scrape the roots, cut them in short lengths, and throw them into vinegar and water as they are being done. Boil them till tender in salted water, drain them, toss them in a saucepan with a piece of butter and a little lemon juice; add salt, and serve.

VEAL CUTLETS BROILED.—Cut some cutlets from a small neck of veal; trim, and sprinkle them with pepper and salt; dip them in liquefied butter, and broil them on or in front of a clear but not too fierce fire. Serve garnished with fried bacon and quarters of lemon. Or knead a piece of butter with parsley and a little thyme fine mixed, plenty of lemon juice, and pepper and salt to taste. At the time of serving put a piece of this butter the size of a walnut on each cutlet, broiled as above.

TO PRESERVE AUTUMN LEAVES.—Spread the fresh leaves and press them in a suitable dish, with alternate layers of fine sand, which is thoroughly dry and as hot as the hand can bear. When the sand has cooled they may be removed, smoothed under a hot iron, dipped for a moment in clear French spirit varnish, and allowed to dry in the air.

BONE JELLY.—The bones, crushed small, are to be boiled for fifteen minutes in a kettle of water, and the fat (which is fit for all common purposes) skimmed off as soon as cold. The bones are then to be ground and boiled in eight times their weight of water (of which that they have been already boiled in must form a part) until half of it is wasted, when a very nutritious jelly will be obtained. Iron vessels should alone be used in this process, as the jelly and soup act upon copper, brass, and other metals. The bones of fresh meat are the most productive, those of boiled meat come next, while those of roasted meat scarcely afford any jelly.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

STRAIGHTENING OF EXHIBITION

THE Alhambra is said to have acquired the right to represent "La Venus Noire" in this country. Its success at the Chatelet is undoubted; in fact, it is one of the most brilliant spectacles that has been produced for years. The plot of the piece, so far as there is any plot, is of the simplest. The Alhambra is the most suitable theatre for the representation of this grand spectacle, and the enterprising management will doubtless achieve a grand success.

Edwin Booth intends to act in London, and negotiations are now in progress, between Henry Irving and himself, with a view to his appearance. Mr. Booth will come over next spring, and it is not unlikely that Mr. Irving, a little later in the same year, will make his long-contemplated visit to America.

Faded hair is being largely used for the adornment of French children belonging to high life. Those soft flaxen locks that are seen floating in the wind on the beaches of Trouville and Dieppe are, it appears, in many cases false.

The Empress Eugénie has accepted the offer of the Queen, and she will shortly take up her residence at Abergeldie Castle for a brief period.

A LADY has been exciting some surprise in the Champs Elysées, by leading about a full-grown fox. Reynard seemed to be on the best terms with the dogs which careered around him, and showed two rows of most uncompromising teeth to those which showed a disposition to resent the intrusion.

CARTER LOMB GIFFORD, V.C., has been entrusted by Sir Garnet Wolseley with the official despatches announcing the capture of Cetawayo, and will, on his arrival in England, be entitled to the allowance of £500 which it is customary to grant to the officer bringing home the despatches announcing the successful close of a campaign.

The damage to Her Majesty's ship "Tenedos" is so great that it is expected the crew will be paid off and transferred to another ship, and the vessel, which was built at Devonport seven years ago, and cost £40,000, repaired.

A NEW mode of collecting honey is being tried in Germany. A small apparatus with wires gives the bees an electric shock, and they fall to the bottom of the hive, remaining motionless for several hours.

The latest advertisement ruse is to send a telegram to the victim. Advertisers would plead in justification that circulars are systematically discarded, and post cards refused at many houses; and they appear to think that indirectly at least, they gain by exasperating people at a shilling a head. But it is incredible to believe that the lady or gentleman, who, with trembling fingers, opens a telegram to read, let us say, "The mountain roseberry, at 38s., is decidedly the best—Sole agents, Pest and Bother," would write a polite order to the ingenious firm.

## CONTENTS.

Page.	Page.
ETHEL ARBUTHNOT; OR, WHO'S HER HUSBAND ... 553	CORRESPONDENCE ... 576
SCIENCE ... 556	
THE COST OF CORA'S LOVE ... 557	
FOOT, THE COMEDIAN ... 560	
PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS ... 561	
CLARICE VILLIERS; OR, WHAT LOVE FEARED ... 562	CLARA LORRAINE; OR, THE LUCKY TOEKS, commenced in ... 543
UNDER A LOVE CHARM; OR, A SECRET WRONG ... 565	THE COST OF CORA'S LOVE commenced in ... 544
MEXICAN EXECUTIONS ... 568	CLARICE VILLIERS; OR, WHAT LOVE FEARED, commenced ... 545
CLARA LORRAINE; OR, THE LUCKY TOEKS ... 568	UNDER A LOVE CHARM; OR, A SECRET WRONG, commenced in ... 554
TRUE IN DEATH ... 572	ETHEL ARBUTHNOT; OR, WHO'S HER HUSBAND? com- menced in ... 557
PACIFIC ... 574	
GEMS ... 575	
STATISTICS ... 575	
HOUSEHOLD TRICKS ... 575	
SCIENCE ... 575	

## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**STUDENT.**—It was not a proper thing for the person to whom you refer to read his newspaper aloud while you were trying to study. According to your statement of the case, you did nothing wrong. As you feel so friendly towards the gentleman, and are so desirous of soothing his wounded feelings, there would be no harm in speaking to him on the subject and telling him what you have told me.

**INTERESTING.**—We cannot give you any harmless receipt that will make you look thin and pale.

**E. C.**—We think the market is overstocked with fancy work; but if you address your letter to the Editor of the "Queen" newspaper we think you might obtain a more satisfactory answer.

**E. T. C.**—In the absence of any agreement to the contrary, the tenancy is a quarterly one, and terminable by giving a quarter's notice; we don't think the landlord would be supported were he to insist on a half-year's notice. You can always underlet at your own risk, provided there is no prohibition in writing from the landlord.

**M. J. D.**—Although the man has kept silence for eight years, neither husband nor wife can marry again with impunity without having previously obtained a legal divorce.

**ANXIOUS NELL.**—So far as we can understand your letter, the young man has not evinced any loverlike feelings towards you, but rather those of a brother. We think that the young man has perceived your liking for him and avoided you. Your best course would now be to avoid him, and then, if he has any serious intentions towards you, he will certainly seek you.

**JACK.**—Your question is one more for a lawyer than for me. But we believe the law requires that where luggage is left at an hotel or public-house, and the owner disappears, twelve months must elapse before the hotel-keeper can dispose of it, and then after giving public notice in one of the morning papers.

**H. L.**—The receiver and manager will be entitled to remuneration according to the amount of work done by him. At the close of the liquidation he will prepare his cash account and bill of charges. The registrar of the county court will then tax, and allow him a fair sum. In case of a liquidation the allocatur (amount allowed) will be paid out of the assets which have come to the hands of the receiver. In case of a composition, the debtor pays the amount.

**EMMA.**—Cooper's Effervescent Lozenges are highly spoken of as throat lozenges and an effective remedy for dryness of the throat.

**W. P.**—Brown winter jacket: The shape will be tight-fitting redingotes, cut like a man's coat, with a seam at the waist that joins the skirt to the body, a fold (where the pockets are) at the back, each side of the middle open, and a button at the top of each. A pocket-flap on the seam at the hips like men's cut-away jackets will be put on some, but on others there will be a breast pocket instead. The fronts double breasted, and the edges simply stitched. Trimmings and minor differences may yet occur. It is not likely that brown will be at all fashionable—black broad cloth, indigo blue Melton, and diagonals.

**E. G. F.**—Stimulant for the growth of hair: Take strong mercurial ointment, half an ounce; spirit of hartshorn, half an ounce; tincture of cantharides, half an ounce; oil of nutmeg, half an ounce; camphorated oil, six ounces; to be carefully mixed, and a little rubbed into the roots of the hair for six or eight weeks, and if it causes soreness desist for a few days, and renew the application when the irritation of the scalp has passed. The skin of some persons is much more delicate and tender than that of others, and when the stimulant causes much smarting and redness it should be weakened by the addition of some sweet olive oil. The hair becoming gray in patches: The application of the following lotion to the faded part will restore it to its original colour: Take of superacetate of lead, fifteen grains; milk of sulphur, forty-two grains; glycerine, half an ounce; rose water, four ounces; mix and apply with a soft brush, or if your hair is black (you omitted to state colour) use a walnut pomade as a dressing.

**RIGHT GUIDE and LEFT MARKER,** two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Right Guide is twenty-five, fair, good-looking, fond of children. Left Marker is twenty-two, medium height, fond of dancing. Respondents must be about twenty, of loving dispositions.

**FRANCE,** twenty-three, dark, medium height, would like to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-five, fair, of a loving disposition.

**ALISON,** twenty, tall, dark, good-looking, would like to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-two, fond of home and children, fair, good-looking. Must reside near London.

**OLD BOOTS and PUSS,** two friends, wish to correspond with two young gentlemen with a view to matrimony. Old Boots is tall, dark hair and eyes, fond of home and children, domesticated. Puss is loving, brown hair, blue eyes, fond of home, medium height.

**DARKIE,** twenty, tall, dark, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, dark.

**JACK STATNAIL and TOM CAPTAN,** two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Jack Statnail is of medium height, light hair, blue eyes, loving. Tom Captan has black hair and eyes, of a loving disposition.

**GENUINE,** forty-four, would like to correspond with a lady about forty with means.

**SARINA,** twenty-two, medium height, fair, light hair, blue eyes, fond of dancing, would like to correspond with a young lady about the same age. A lady's-maid preferred.

**EMILY and JENNY,** two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. Emily is nineteen, tall, and fair. Jenny is twenty-two, medium height, dark. Respondents must be dark, fond of home.

**HARRY, GEORGE, and CHARLIE,** three brothers, would like to correspond with three young ladies. Harry is twenty-three, medium height, grey eyes, fond of home and children. George is nineteen, tall, good-looking, fond of home and music. Charlie is twenty, medium height, dark, handsome, fond of music.

## NOTES.

AROUND my couch no friend stands near,

No hearts beat warm for me;

No eye to shed a friendly tear,

No word of sympathy.

No hand to feel the ebbing tide

No slowly leave my heart;

No one to hear if e'en I cried—

Ungifted I depart.

No mother here to press upon

My aching head her hand;

No one here to call me "son,"

No one to call me friend.

'Tis hard to die when kindred stand

Around to soothe and cheer;

But, ah! to die in this strange land

Is harder still to bear.

No marble shaft will mark the spot,

Or tell the world my name;

By every one I'll be forgot,

None know from whence I came.

No gentle one will strew my grave

With budding roses fair;

But weeds and tangled grass will wave

And scent the summer air.

A single word above my grave

Will tell my name, my home;

A name, ah, few would care to have—

It is the word "Unknown."

KORT.

**FROM IN UNDER and SWAT THE MAIN,** two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. From in Under is twenty-seven, dark. Swat the Main is twenty-five, dark hair, blue eyes, fond of music.

**MRS. M.,** forty-one, brown hair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a steady man about forty-five.

**UNHOOK IT, KICK IT, and SCRUB IT,** three seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with three young ladies with a view to matrimony. Unhook It is tall, dark, good-looking, fond of children. Kick It is fair, tall, blue eyes, fond of music. Scrub It is of medium height, dark hair, loving.

**MAGGIE and BRUCIE,** two friends, would like to correspond with two gentlemen. Maggie is twenty-three, brown hair and eyes, of a loving disposition. Brucie is nineteen, brown hair, dark blue eyes.

**RIDGE ROPE and BOBSTAT,** two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. Ridge Rope is twenty-three, of a loving disposition. Bobstat is twenty-two, dark, fond of music.

**A DEBENTHIRE LASS,** nineteen, tall, fair, brown hair, dark blue eyes, good-looking, would like to correspond with an officer in the army. Respondent must be dark, tall, good-looking.

**BILLY, JIBDOWNHAUL, and TOPSAIL,** three seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with three young ladies with a view to matrimony. Billy is twenty-three, medium height, fair, blue eyes. Jibdownhaul is twenty-four, tall, fair, fond of music and children. Topsail is twenty-two, dark hair, blue eyes, good-looking. Respondents must be fair, medium height, thoroughly domesticated.

**JOLLY GEORGE and HAPPY CHARLEY,** two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. Jolly George is twenty-one, curly hair, of a loving disposition, fond of children. Happy Charley is twenty-three, light hair, hazel eyes.

**E. A. E. and Z. Y. X.,** two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. E. A. E. is twenty-one, tall, dark, fond of home. Z. Y. X. is nineteen, tall, fair, fond of home and music.

**WILLIAM, NED, and JOE,** three seamen in the Royal Navy, wish to correspond with three young ladies with a view to matrimony. William is thirty, tall, fair, fond of dancing. Ned is twenty-eight, medium height, fair, curly hair, blue eyes, fond of music. Joe is twenty-seven, fair, fond of music and children. Respondents must be between twenty-two and twenty-five, thoroughly domesticated.

**KATE and ANNIE,** two friends, would like to correspond with two seamen in the Royal Navy about twenty, tall, good-looking. Kate is eighteen, medium height, dark hair and eyes, domesticated. Annie is eighteen, brown hair, grey eyes, of a loving disposition.

**MARK is DOWN and BELAY,** two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Mark is Down is twenty, tall, fair, fond of children. Belay is nineteen, dark, fond of children.

**ORGANIST,** nineteen, tall, good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady about eighteen, tall, good-looking.

**JAMES S.,** twenty, fair, good-looking, fond of home, would like to correspond with a domestic servant about nineteen.

**HOOKPOT, PANNIKIN, and JIBSTAY,** three seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with three young ladies with a view to matrimony. Hookpot is twenty-four, brown hair, grey eyes, fond of children. Pannikin is twenty-five, dark hair, hazel eyes, medium height, fond of music. Jibstay is twenty-five, dark hair and eyes, of a loving disposition. Respondents must be about twenty-three, fond of home and music, of loving dispositions.

**CATHERINE,** eighteen, tall, dark, brown hair, light grey eyes, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty, good-looking.

**WILLIAM L.,** twenty-one, would like to correspond with a young lady about nineteen with a view to matrimony.

**J. W. B.,** eighteen, fair, would like to correspond with a young lady. Respondents must be about seventeen or eighteen, loving, dark, fond of music.

**HAVE GOT and SWAB TAIL JOE,** two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies about twenty-one, domesticated. Have Got is twenty-two, dark, good-looking. Swab Tail Joe is twenty-three, fair, good-looking.

**LOFTY DAN, NARROW BRIDGE, and DARRY DOYLE,** three seamen in the Royal Navy, wish to correspond with three young ladies with a view to matrimony. Lofty Dan is nineteen, tall, fair. Narrow Bridge is twenty. Darry Doyle is twenty-three, tall, good-looking.

**GEORGE,** seventeen, tall, fair, good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady who is handsome and of a loving disposition.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

**COFFER** is responded to by—Leontine, tall, dark, fond of home and music.

**SYLVIA** by—F., twenty-three, tall, medium height.

**ROSA** by—G. L., twenty-one, dark, of a loving disposition, fond of home and music.

**EDITH L.** by—Purser's Dip, fair, handsome, fond of children and dancing.

**H. L. H.** by—Clara, twenty, medium height, dark, fond of children.

**HARRY** by—Annie, dark, medium height, fond of home and children.

**R. E. H.** by—Mande, nineteen, tall, brown hair, good-looking, thoroughly domesticated.

**A. Z.** by—Can Do, forty-seven, dark, good-looking, a seaman about to leave the R.N. with a pension.

**PARBY** by—Topsail Jack, fair, good-looking, fond of music and dancing.

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